

A
VINDICATION
OF THE
Eternal Law,
AND
EVERLASTING GOSPEL.

PART II.

WHEREIN

Justification before Faith is Stated and Limited ; and
Justification by Faith Asserted and Proved :
The Offer of CHRIST to Sinners ; the Usefulness
of Exhortations and Motives in Preaching the
GOSPEL, is Vindicated ; And
Some other Weighty Points are briefly Discussed.

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Christ in Bury, Suffolk.*

L O N D O N :
Reprinted in the Year M,DCC,LIII.

VINDICATION

OF THE

Eternal Law

AND

EVERLASTING GOVERNMENT



Illustration by the artist, and
the only of CHRISTIANITY
of Expositions and Miracles in the
GOVERNMENT, indicated, and
some other Works Point to the same.

By JOHN BARR, Esq. of the
County of Devon, Esq.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

HAVING in the former Part defended the unalterable Nature of the Law as a Rule of Duty, and of Righteousness, and the Everlasting Gospel, from being a New Remedial Law: In this Part I endeavour to defend some Branches of Gospel Doctrine, and the Usefulness of the Law to Convince of Sin. Wherefore I have continued the same Title to this Part, which at first I only intended for the former.

When it is the very Design of the Gospel to advance the Grace and Righteousness of the Lord Jesus: I confess, I am most afraid of those Errors that detract from his Honour and Glory. But I no way doubt there are who seek a Shelter for Licentious Practices, in Doctrines and Opinions, that may give a Countenance thereunto. Howbeit I dare not call all those Antinomian Doctrines or Opinions, which may be, by corrupt unsanctified Nature, abused to evil Practices; for then the whole Gospel is Antinomianism. Nor is there any doubt but the Doctrine of Eternal Election may be as much abused unto Liberty, as that of Eternal Justification. A Heart under the Power and Influence of the Grace of God, though under some Mistakes about the Name and Definition of Things,

will be in no Danger of turning the Grace of God into Lasciviousness.

That a Believer is complete in CHRIST, that his Sin is covered from God's Eye as a Judge, and that he hath a full Title to Eternal Life, and shall never perish, is the strongest Cord of Love to engage the Heart to Holiness where it is believed. But those who know not God's Way of accepting first the Person, and then the Performance; but think that Performances must go first, as Conditions of the Acceptation of the Person, do stumble at the Stumbling-stone, and take all Free Grace (for they know no otherwise) to be an Enemy to Holiness, because it throws down the Dagon of Self-Righteousness.

I have divided this Part of the Work into Three Sections. The First treats of Justification as to the Article of Time: and finds some Truth in what is pleaded for Justification before Faith, as well as maintains a real Justification before God by Faith.

As to Justification from Eternity, I have endeavoured to weigh and answer the strongest Arguments that are brought for it; but do own that some Judicious and Holy Men have written in Defence or Favour of it. Nor is there any doubt, but if what they took to be Justification, were so, it was from Eternity. Those who own the Imputation of Adam's Sin to all his Posterity; and Actual Condemnation by the Just Sentence of a Righteous Law for that and their own Personal Transgressions, and that it is GOD's Transient Act in Time that completes his Justifying Act to the Sinner;

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can have no hurtful Meaning in their Abstract Idea of Eternal Justification. Yea, they must needs own a Justification in Time, as real as that Condemnation by the Law, which is all that need be urged as unto Forbearance and Brotherly Love.

But some others under the Countenance of Great Names, not rightly understanding their Meaning, nor how to state these Great Points, unadvisedly take them up, and run up and down to teach others, not well knowing what they say, nor whereof they affirm; exclaiming against Confessing of Sin, and asking Pardon for it; crying down Self-Examination as needless and fruitless; Allegorizing the Scriptures quite beside the Intendment of the Holy Ghost; turning all into one common Road; not balancing the Doctrines of Grace with other necessary Points, as the Evil and Danger of Sin, the Necessity and Usefulness of good Works in their Places; despising the Form of sound Words, as it has been received by the Protestant Churches since the Reformation; overvaluing their own Light, especially in this Point, That their Justification was as complete, tho' not so evident, before Faith, as it is at or after Faith; Undervaluing others, both Ministers and Christians, as Dark and of a Legal Spirit, that run not their Length. Many Good People are misled with some of these Things: And Others give too clear Evidence of the Ill Influence their Principles have into their Practices, whilst they dishonour that Free Grace which they do in Words so much cry up.

Free Grace is indeed the most precious Thing in the World; tender and dear to every one that believes: And it is in its utmost Freedom, Glory, and Inconditionality, that I venture to maintain it against the Assertors of Conditional Justification. But I would do Justice to all the Parts of Truth. And herein I was not willing to content myself with raising a Cry of Antinomianism (as the Manner is) against such Opinions; but was willing to consider in what Sense they are held, and with what Arguments defended.

It is sometimes urged against Justification from Eternity, That a Decree to Create may as well be called Creation, as a Decree to Justify may be called Justification. But those who plead for such Eternal Justification, don't argue so much about a Decree to Justify: For so far as there was a Decree to Justify in Time, So far Justification was not from Eternity: A Decree makes it Future. But they argue from certain Eternal Acts in God, which They take to be Justification itself. This Point is argued in the following Discourse.

Ordinarily those who have pleaded for Eternal Justification, have held there was not the like Reason as to Sanctification; because the former was an Act in God, towards Souls; and the latter a Work of God upon Souls, which therefore required a Subject in Being. But now Some seem to set Sanctification upon the same Foot: And indeed it is so as to the Purpose of God, and his Promise in CHRIST: Yet I think we ought not to speak of Sanctification from Eternity, or that we are Sanctified from all Eternity. This has not ordinarily

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ordinarily been contended for: Yet it may be so, if Men go upon that Ground of the Gift in Christ before the World began. But I shou'd take this to be exceeding impertinent. Howbeit, this Difference is Observable, about the Works of the New Creation in all the Parts thereof, there was a Covenant among the Divine Persons from everlasting, and a Promise in CHRIST, which I don't find concerning the Works of the first Creation.

It is necessary to advertise the Reader, that when I have used the Term [Eternal Justification] I intend it à parte ante, as from Eternity: For à parte post, as unto Eternity: Blessed be God, Justification in itself, and in its Glorious Effects is Eternal! As Redemption is Heb. ix. 12. Nor do I deny that as in its CAUSES, tho' not in its Self, it hath been from Eternity.

In the Second Section I defend the Offer of Christ in the Gospel to all indefinitely unto whom he is Preached; the Use of Exhortations and Motives, as well fetched from the Law for Conviction, as from the Gospel for Encouragement. In this I have respect to what has been of late advanced by Mr. Joseph Hufsey, now Pastor of the Church in Cambridge.

The late Book of this Learned Man hath been the Subject of much Discourse. I think it may have its Usefulness in many Things for Refreshment and further Light. Yet I by no Means approve the Manner of his handling Mr. Hunt, and think it were not difficult to retaliate: But I am far from any such Thoughts or Design. Should Jesus Christ be as strict and severe with Him, in every Word and

Pbrase, as He has been with his Brother, I am apt to think, He must retract much more than his Gospel-Feast. Nor was it worth his while to have launched forth to such a Length oft-times in mere Trifles, either in a palpable Mistake of his Antagonist, or where a little Candor might have put a fair Construction.

His Opposition to the Systems is not managed with that Deference and Regard to the Judgment of so many Godly, Grave and Learned Authors, as it ought. I divide the Difference between Him and Them. Their Method is good in teaching us as Men: And his perhaps is preferable, Teaching us as Christians. (1.) Their Method is good, Teaching us as Men. And as the Apostle, in another Case I may say, That is first which is Natural, and afterwards that which is Spiritual. The System-Authors teach Truth concerning the Nature, Persons, and Perfections of God; in which they draw their Light from Scripture-Revelation, and not from Nature only. It is true, sticking to the Natural Order of Things, there are some Truths (it may be) they don't discover; Yet they have not excluded or opposed those Truths, which they have not expressly included. If under the Article of Creation, they treat not of CHRIST's Hand therein distinctly; yet under a suitable Head, they prove his GODHEAD thereby. And if when treating of the Divine Persons they don't expressly speak of the Man Christ: Yet under the Article of the Mediator, they shew that he was made Man, whom before they had proved to be GOD. And how any in Reading of them should continue ignorant

rant Doctrinally of Christ's Manhood, is to me a Mystery. The Doctrine of the Trinity must be taught Distinctly from that of the Man Christ. We must be careful not to insinuate the Existence of any Creature in God from Eternity. (2.) Mr. Hufsey's Method of Teaching and Studying God in Christ, and mixing the Doctrine of the Mediator with that of the Divine Nature and Persons of God, is preferable to that of the Systems, when we are to be taught as Christians. I abstract here from his Notion of the Man subsisting in God from Everlasting. I was stumbled at his Opposition to the Systems in teaching the Article of the Trinity, without mixing the Doctrine of the Man Christ in that very Article: But when I understood that he made the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity above and before any Doctrine of Christ Man; that he allowed an Abstract Consideration of the Trinity as absolutely Eternal, to found the Doctrine of the Mediator upon; and that his Meaning was, That we must Ascend these Heights thro' CHRIST the Mediator, as in whom alone God is Revealed, the Offence as to this ceased. The Doctrine of the Nature, Persons, Perfections, Decrees, and Works of God, ought to be Studied and taught in and thro' Christ. It is true, the Doctrine of the Nature, Persons, and Perfections of God is in the things themselves above and before all Consideration of the Man and Mediator Jesus Christ: Yet we must learn them of the only Begotten Son, who hath revealed the Father. In him the Glory of God shines forth; and the clearest and only saving Discovery of God in his Persons and Attributes is made. And as to the Divine
 Decrees,

Decrees, *they are all Purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph. iii. 11. God aimed at the Glory of his Son in All of them. And as to his Works of Creation and Providence, Christ, God-Man, has the Glory of them in Scripture.* The God of Jacob, *who is the HELP and HOPE of a poor Sinner, must be He who made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that therein is. Psal. cxlvi. 5, 6. Yea, and BY Him and FOR Him (who is GOD's dear Son and our Redeemer) were all things created, Col. i. 13, 14. 16. So that when we know Jesus Christ, we must go over again with all our Knowledge of God, yea and of ourselves, that we may know all more spiritually.*

*I advance to one Point more in Mr. Hufsey, and that is, of Local Motion, or Interpreting the Phrases of Christ's coming down from Heaven, of the Human Nature or Man Christ; together with his Opinion of the subsisting of the Man in God from Everlasting, and his Pre-existence in the Times of the Old Testament. How he will explain his Subsistence and Pre-existence, is best known to himself. I shall content myself with this, Existentia est id quo unaquæque Res stat & reperitur extra Causas producentes. Existence is that whereby every thing stands forth, and is found out of its producing Causes. The producing Causes of Christ's Humanity were the Creation-Work of the Holy Spirit, and the Seed of the Woman. The Man Christ did not stand forth out of these Producing Causes in the Times of the Old Testament. As to the Members of his Body Natural it might be said, as yet there was none of them, Psal. cxxxix. 16. There was not
the*

the Substance of his Human Body, according to what He said after his Resurrection, Handle me and see, for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones as ye see me have. Whatever real Existence or Pre-existence short of this may be disputed for, is trifling (especially to amuse the Vulgar with such things) and contributes nothing to exp'ain those Phrases of Christ's coming down from Heaven; which are more intelligibly explained by the Real Pre-existence of Christ's Human Soul, which the Bishop of Gloucester has contended for. I confess I fall in with neither of them.

Christ's coming down from Heaven as Man, which Mr. Husley, with so much Pains, and for so many Pages, maintains, must suppose an Actual Pre-existence of the Man. And unless Jesus Christ had a Human Nature before his coming into the World, and so came down from Heaven into the Womb of the Virgin by an Elapse, he has carried his Arguing too far upon this Point, and has given Occasion to think, that this is his Opinion.

CHRIST came down from Heaven, (1.) As to the Original of his Humanity. When God had fixed a Law and Course in Nature for Men to come into this World, viz. by Generation; and yet brought his First-begotten into the World another Way, beyond all that was in Nature, by the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, and over-shadowing the Virgin; He may truly be said to come from Heaven. When Others are of the Earth Earthly; He is the Lord from Heaven by his high and glorious Descent, 1 Cor. xv. 47. (2.) As to the Right He had to Heavenly Glory, from the first Moment

Moment of his coming into the World. He need not have been under the Law, in a Humbled, Obeying State; but by virtue of the Hypostatical Union, He was the LORD and HEIR of HEAVEN. So that He did truly empty Himself, Phil. ii. and lay aside his Glory, as truly as if the Humanity had been a Million of Years in Heaven, and then had come under that Abasement. (3.) When the Father prepared Him a Body, Heb. x. 5. God the SON came down, assumed it into Union with Himself! came down and dwelt in this Tabernacle, which God had pitched for Him, Heb. viii. 2. John i. 14. As truly as GOD is said to come down on Mount Sinai, and on the Tabernacle of old, and in some higher Sense. This I take to be the most famous and eminent Sense of CHRIST's coming down from Heaven.

Such Texts therefore are more easily and genuinely accounted for in the common Way than in Mr. Hufsey's. And Other Texts will not admit his Interpretation. For then how is CHRIST of the Seed and Family of Abraham and David? How is He the Seed of the Woman? Our near Kinsman? Partaker of the same Flesh and Blood as we, if He really pre-existed to his Incarnation! I grant, that Christ as Mediator was set up from Everlasting in the Covenant between the Divine Persons; That All things were MADE for Him considered as God-Man; That He sustained the Person of God-Man, and was reputed as such by the Father, while as yet he had not taken our Nature; and That He had Secret Glory with the Father before the World began. These Truths
contained

contained in Mr. Hufsey's Discourse may perhaps have made some farther Discovery of CHRIST to some Believers than They had seen. But a Boundary is wanting, and Occasion is given to Error in this Point of his Human Nature. I cannot here but recommend that Discourse of Dr. Goodwin's, Of the Knowledge of God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, Vol. II. Part 2. From whence, that Mr. Hufsey received Light as to what is excellent in his Book about these Eternal Things, and some deep Points in Divinity; I have at least as much Reason to think, as he had to think that Mr. Hunt had stole a Good Part of the Rose of Sharon out of his Gospel Feast. In this of Dr. Goodwin, the Glory of CHRIST God-Man before the World was, is excellently set forth. A Glory which has not been seen, nor is seen, but by a few. His Glory as Redeemer is but one Half of his Glory. For by Him and for Him, God-man, were all Things CREATED. To whom be Glory and Dominion for Ever and Ever. Amen.

But that the Doctor be not misunderstood, let the Reader compare what He saith about Christ's bringing down a Human Nature from Heaven, which He takes Notice of to be the Opinion of some, and wholly rejects, and gives a sound Interpretation of those Texts that speak of his coming down from Heaven. Vol. II. Part 3. Pag. 97.

I would not have it understood as if I approved of all the rest of Mr. Hufsey's Book which I do not here except against. I was not willing to hint at more Mistakes than my Room and designed Scope will admit me to suggest an Answer to. But it seemed

seemed to me necessary to caution the Reader in a few Hints to weigh well what he reads, to pray hard, and search the Scriptures, that he may discern what is to be approved, and what not.

I really love and value the Author, of whom I am speaking, as a Brother in Christ, as a Minister of Christ. But Oh that his Strength had been laid out another Way! That there had been more of the Spirit of Meekness, Humility, and Love, in the whole Work! That what is good and excellent had been in a smaller Treatise by itself! That I nor any other had had no Occasion to make unpleasing Remarks thereon! It is my great Grief that it is otherwise. I refer the Reader to the second Section of the ensuing Treatise for what I further offer as to Mr. Hussey.

The Third Section treats briefly of some Points of no small Weight. The Heads of Things may be seen in the Contents.

I leave all with God the Father of our Lord Jesus for a Blessing; and conclude with my earnest Desires that the blessed Spirit of Truth may lead his People into all Truth, and the Spirit of Love may influence the Hearts of all (tho' differing in Judgment) who love CHRIST in Sincerity, to love one another. Amen.

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SECTION I.

Of Justification.

C H A P. I.

Of Justification from Eternity.

BEING very sensible, that *Professors*, that *Believers* themselves, are *slow of Heart* to take in the *everlasting Love* of God, and to believe it in the Glory of it ; I would be very loth to have any Hand in weakening or holding down the Faith of God's Children therein. Therefore while I think it not proper to define Justification by those *Eternal Acts* which some speak of ; yet I do believe such Acts of Grace to have been towards God's Elect before the World was. Nor do I hold, that Justification is in no sort before Faith ; nor can by any means approve when Men in their Arguments drive at this, *That We begin with Believing, before God begins with Pardoning and Justifying.*

It has been my Study (under Divine Assistance) to avoid Extremes. And because I apprehend an Extreme in Mens pleading for *Justification from Eternity*, I shall first endeavour to give my own Thoughts in this great Point ; and then to shew how far we ought to bear with *others* in their different Expressions thereof.

There are divers Ways of stating the Doctrine of *Justification from Eternity*, by those who maintain it. I shall consider, *First*, That way of stating it which makes it stand upon an equal Foot with other Benefits, as *Sanctification* and *Glorification*. *Next*, That way of *Eternal Justification* which sets it upon another Foot than those other Benefits.

First, I shall consider that way of stating it, which makes it to stand upon an equal Foot with other Benefits; especially, *Sanctification* and *Glorification*.

Now here I oppose not, but own the following Positions as Truths of the Gospel; viz.

1. That the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, have an equal Glory in our Justification. But it doth not necessarily follow, that the Father's Glory in Justification lies in justifying us from Everlasting. But his Glory shines forth, (1.) In the Purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus hereabout. (2.) In the Contrivance of the glorious Way of Justification, and ordaining the Righteousness of Christ to be that Way. (3.) In the Promise made to Christ of Justification for all whom he should ransom, *Tit. i. 2*. Which Promise was a Gift of Justification given in the Eternal Covenant between the Father and Son, *2 Tim. i. 9*. (4.) In sending his Son, and actually justifying him as the Surety, and his Seed in Time, according to those Transactions from Eternity.

2. I own, That there was a Grant of Justification made to Christ on the Behalf of the Elect from Eternity. Justification is one Branch of the *Grace given us in Christ before the World began*, *2 Tim. i. 9*. In like manner, it must be said of Sanctification, and all the Fruits of the Spirit, of Perseverance in Grace, and of Eternal Glory. This Way of stating it carries our Thoughts no higher as to the one than as to the other; but they must be regulated alike as to both. And surely, it sounds harsh to say, We were sanctified from Eternity, because Sanctification was agreed upon in Covenant,

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nant, and *given*, that is, *promised* in Christ, *before the World began.* 2 *Tim.* i. 9. with *Tit.* i. 2.

3. I grant, that God from Eternity took a Fore-view and Prospect of his Elect in Christ, and there beheld them righteous in that foreviewed Righteousness agreed on in Covenant between the Father and Son, *Acts* xv. 18.

God's viewing or beholding his Elect, in Christ from Eternity, may be considered Two Ways, (1.) In the *Supralapsarian* way. As a Benefit above the Consideration of the Fall in the Mind of God. Thus the Elect stood before God in all that Perfection, in all that Glory, which they shall be glorified with unto Eternity. This Grace admits of no Change with or by all the Changes in Time, in the several Conditions the Elect pass thro'. Dr. Goodwin on *Eph.* i. 6. p. 93. when he pleads for *Eternal* Acceptation in the Beloved, is by some misunderstood. For he declares he means not that Acceptation which is the Second Branch, our Justification, but a Benefit *above the Fall*; whereas Justification is a Privilege bestowed on *fallen* Creatures, and comes in by *Redemption*. Thus then there can be no Thoughts that God's beholding his Elect in Christ is Justification. (2.) In the *Sublapsarian* way. God in his infinite Foreknowledge seeing Man in his fallen State, still beheld his Son their Surety, and their Righteousness; and viewed them in him, not only in all the Steps of their *Restoration*, but in the highest *Perfection* of it, as it shall be another Day. The Glory of this Work stood before him, and in Christ his Soul *delighted, rested, and was well-pleased,* *Isa.* xlii. 1. *Mat.* iii. 17. Thus *he was in Christ* (*viz.* from Everlasting, for who dares fix a Date?) *reconciling the World to himself,* 2 *Cor.* v. 19. He was about this blessed Work in his Eternal Counsels. But still, if I mistake not, This carries our Justification no higher than our Sanctification and Glorification. For did God from Eternity view his Elect in Christ, as to their justified

State? So he foresaw them as the Workmanship of his Spirit, and in the Heights of Glory. All his Works, in the Perfection of them, were before Him. I think (with Dr. Goodwin) that Text, *Rom. viii. 29, 30. Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate; and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified;* speaks all of Eternal Things, being in the Time past, he called, he justified, &c. *i. e.* in his Purpose and Promise made to Christ. Such was the Platform, so was the glorious Scheme laid; and in this Order it is executed in Time, as to those Acts which belong to Time; *viz. Calling, Justifying, Glorifying.* Be it then, that Justification in Time is according to the Pattern of those Eternal Thoughts; so is *Sanctification* likewise, and so is *Glorification.* Yet these are so real, and such proper Works in Time, that none have thought fit to contend for Sanctification, or Glorification, from Eternity. We are safe therefore so far as Justification, in this Controversy, stands upon the same Foot with these. It would doubtless be a *Strife about Words*, and not to *Godly Edifying*, to contend for Sanctification from Eternity, any otherwise than in some of its Causes, and then to own (which at last must be owned) that the Truth of the Work is in Time wrought upon the Heart of a Sinner. So as to Justification, if it be owned, that there are true and real Justifying Acts of God, transient and passing out towards the Creature in Time, it will follow, That the other was but the *Idea* and *Foreview* in God himself. And so we are justified from Eternity no otherwise than we are sanctified. But to contend for the one, and not for the other, is to shew a Partiality to Truth, or rather a Conviction, That what is evidently a Work in Time, could not be so from Eternity. And the Truth is, thus it stands as to Justification, which I shall shew in another Chapter.

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Secondly, *I shall consider that way of stating Justification from Eternity, which sets it upon another Foot than those other forenamed Benefits.* And this is Twofold.

I. The Will of God not to punish for Sin, or impute it unto his People; this (say some) is Justification. But this may be taken up Two Ways: Either,

1. That God did absolutely will never to impute Sin (or that Sin should never be imputed) to his Elect: Or,

2. That he willed to charge their Sins on Christ, and to discharge his Elect, and not to deal with them according to their Sins.

1. To say, That God did from Eternity absolutely will that Sin should never, in any sort, be imputed to his Elect, is not Truth: For Adam's Sin, and their own personal Sins, are by the Law imputed to them.

I shall endeavour to confirm the Imputation of Adam's Sin to the Elect, as well as others.

(1.) Adam was a common Person, that stood for all, and therefore sinned for all equally. If, upon this Ground of his *Headship*, it were imputed to the Non-Elect, it must also be imputed to the Elect; for they were *equally* in him as a federal Head and Representative, *Rom. v. 12.*

(2.) This Truth is plainly taught in many Scriptures. *Rom. iii. 19. What things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law, that every Mouth may be stopped, and the whole World become GUILTY before God.* All Men by Nature are under the Law, and that not only the Precept, but condemning Sentence thereof. The whole World stands guilty before God, according to that Law and Covenant he made with them. Again, *Rom. v. 13. For until the Law, Sin was in the World, but Sin is not imputed when there is no Law.* Imputation here is not God's Eternal Will to punish, and deal with Men according to the Law, but it is the Charge itself of the Law. Now Sin was in the World (saith the Apostle) before the Law was given by Moses;

and therefore there was some Law by virtue of which it was imputed, viz. the Law and Covenant with Adam; for *Sin is not imputed where there is no Law*. Where there is a Law then, and Men are Transgressors of it, there is the Imputation of Sin. *Reprobation* is not the Scripture Notion of the Imputation of Sin. It is rather God's Will to leave Men to the Charge and Imputation of Sin by the Law. Sin is no otherwise imputed than as it is a Transgression of the Law. And God has constituted his Law to be the Instrument of that Imputation. I grant the direct Scope of the Apostle here is not to set out the Time when God begins to impute Sin: But these Things he shews: (1.) That there must be a Law in being, to impute Sin to a Sinner in being. (2.) That the Imputation of Sin is by the Law for the *Transgression* thereof. (3.) That the Law in actual Being did impute and charge Sin upon all Men without Exception. For, *Ver. 12. Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned*. If it is imputed by the Law, it is imputed to all who are under the Law: But that was the Case of all the World. Thus stands the Apostle's Argument: *Death, passing upon all Men*, *Ver. 12.* proves that *Sin was imputed before the Law*, *Ver. 13.* Now if Death proves the Imputation of Sin, it proves the Imputation thereof to all; for *Death passes upon all*. I hope such an Article as the Imputation of Adam's Sin, from whence the Doctrine of the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness hath been wont to be enforced, shall not come to be Matter of Controversy among those who are for the Doctrines of Free Grace, when they have been wont to maintain this Truth against the Opposers of those Doctrines. I like not the Shunning of the Word *Imputation*, and instead thereof to speak of the *Transmitting* of Adam's Sin to his Posterity, and of that Sin's *overspreading them*, &c. I confess, how well the Imputation of Sin in Time, and the Non-Imputation of it from Eternity, at least a Will not to impute, will stand

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stand together, it behoves those who thus state *Eternal Justification* to consider. Were not this *Imputation* most real, we should need only an imaginary *Justification*, or only a *Manifestation* of what was before. We should need only to be convinced and persuaded, that all was a *Mistake* as to *Guilt*, *Imputation*, and *Condemnation* (*Rom. v. 18.*) that all this was *prevented* by our being eternally justified.

From this *Doctrine* of the *Imputation* of *Sin*, I argue, *If Adam's Sin, and our own Personal Sins, were imputed in Time, we were not personally justified from Eternity, but do need a true and real Justification in Time.* But the former is true, therefore the latter. The Reason of the Consequence is this, *Where the Guilt and Charge of Sin is, and Law-Condemnation for it, there is not Justification:* Or if any thing in an high abstracted Sense may be so called, as *immanent* in God, whose *immanent Acts* are far above our weak Sight, there will need a new *Justifying Act* of God in *Time*, which passed not before, as real as that *Charge of Sin* was real, as far from being merely a *Manifestation* as that was. If this be granted, this *Controversy* is in *Effect* ended. For whatsoever *Justification* from *Eternity* will stand herewith may be allowed.

In *Time* we became *Sinners*, in *Time* we came under *Condemnation*, and the *Execution* also of the Sentence in Part, as in *Mortality* of the Body, and *Spiritual Death*, as *Blindness* of the Mind, *Rebellion* of the Will, *Alienation* from the Life of God, &c. This we are *redeemed from* by a gracious *Redeemer*, and the *full Execution* of the Sentence is prevented: *Adam* stood as a common Head to the *Elect*, as well as to *others*. He that denies a *Law-Imputation*, and *Law-Condemnation*, and in Part the *Execution* of the *Curse*, shall be forced to deny that ever the *Elect* were *under the Law*. For if they were indeed under the *Law*, then the *Law* being transgressed, necessarily imputes *Sin* to the *Sinner*.

It will be said, This is only a *Law-Imputation* and *Condemnation*. I grant it; for if God absolutely did will to impute Sin, and condemn for it, there could be no Salvation. But let me say, It is a *Law-Imputation* of Sin, and *Condemnation* for it, that the Reprobate perish under, not being redeemed therefrom. This *Law-Imputation* and *Condemnation* was transferred from the Elect to Christ, and it cost his Blood to redeem them from it: And we may truly say, if we had not been redeemed from THIS, we had sunk under it to the lowest Hell. It was with respect to this *only*, that ever the Elect could need a Gospel-Justification: For I speak of the Justification of the *Ungodly*, and not of Sinless Creatures. Herein then is the Grace of our Lord Jesus, that a peculiar Remnant are redeemed from the Imputation, Curse, and Condemnation of the *Law*!

2. God's Eternal Will not to impute Sin to his Elect, may be understood of his Will to charge their Sins on Christ, and discharge the Sinner at the appointed Time. Thus it is most true, He willed not to impute Sin. When in his Law he said, I will impute their Sins to them; the Charge shall first lie there: Then in Christ he said, I will not impute their Sins to them, nor lay them finally to their Charge; but will transfer and lay them on another. This is not contrary to the Law, because Christ was made under the Law in our stead.

Let it be remembered I have already shewn that God did never absolutely will, never to impute Sin in any sort to his People. When such a Will of Non-Imputation is proved, and the Arguments for the Imputation of Sin to the Elect with others, disproved; I shall yield we were justified from Eternity, and need no Justification in Time. That God did will not to impute Sin to his People, without Distinction or Limitation, is not to be taken for granted, but proved. God's *Will* not to impute Sin, that is, to discharge from it, is not to be confounded with *Non-Imputation*. So his Will not to *impute* Sin, and his Will not to *punish*,

nish, are not altogether the same; for when he did absolutely will the latter, *not to punish*, he did in a Sense will to *impute Sin*, viz. by his Law.

But that *God's Eternal Will to justify or pardon, or non-impute Sin, is not Justification*, I'll give Two Reasons of my Thoughts as to this.

1. That Act of God, or that Benefit which is not the Fruit of Christ's Death and Bloodshed, is not Justification: But God's Will not to impute Sin, is not the Fruit of Christ's Death and Bloodshed. Therefore it is not Justification. God, as *God*, absolutely might love us, and give Christ for us, and unto us; but God, as *Lawgiver*, could not be reconciled to us Sinners, nor justify us, but through Christ, and for his Sake. It is certain God's Will was never procured to purpose this or the other, by the Death of Christ. As *God*, without the shedding of Blood, he might will to justify; but, as *Lawgiver*, he cannot justify but by the Blood of his Son. The whole Scripture makes it a Redemption-Benefit, the Fruit of the Death of Christ. Rom. v. 9. *Much more then, being now justified. How? By his Blood.* Ver. 10.—*We were reconciled to God by the DEATH of his Son.* c. iii. 24. *Being justified freely by his Grace, THRO' the REDEMPTION that is in JESUS CHRIST.* It is laid down also negatively, Heb. ix. 22. *Without shedding of Blood there is no Remission.* I cannot think therefore, that is the most accurate Account of Justification, or of Pardon, which lays it in something that the Blood of CHRIST has no Concern in: It is not the Remission spoken of here by the Apostle. Nor is Pardon of Sin any-where spoken of but as a Benefit coming in by Jesus Christ. Justification is not only IN Christ, as Election is, but also for HIS Sake. Justification is a Redemption-Benefit; and can be no otherwise from Eternity than Redemption is: For Redemption is the Cause, and Justification the Effect. We are justified thro' that Redemption. Not only all the Fruits and Effects of Justification, but the Benefit itself, is by Blood, and thro'

thro' the Virtue of Redemption. Let us keep it here then as the Apostle doth, even to Redemption.

2. That Act of God which is no Discharge or Freedom from the Law, or the Charge thereof, wherein God proceeds not by any external Rule as Lawgiver, is not Justification. But God's Will not to impute Sin to his Elect, is no Discharge from the Law, &c. Therefore it is not Justification. Those who are for Eternal Non-Imputation do speak of a Discharge from the Law in Time, as the *Thing willed* by that *Eternal Will*. Very well; But what room for a *Discharge*, where God's Will was, that Sin should never be imputed or *charged*? But if by God's Eternal Will not to impute Sin be meant, that he willed to *remove* the Charge, and discharge the Sinner, then that Will, not being the *Discharge* itself, is not Justification, but only a Will to pardon and justify; or at least it leaves room for that which is truly Justification in Time. Let it but be known what is meant by God's Will not to impute Sin, and the Matter is quickly issued. For if it be intended, that God willed in no sort to impute Sin, it overthrows the Doctrine of the Imputation of Sin, and all that *themselves* say of a Discharge from the Law in Time: But if they mean (as I hope) a Will to transfer the Charge to another, and so *remove* it from the Sinner, and *discharge* him (which the Distinction of the Divine Will, and the *thing willed*, implies); then this supposes that the Sinner was to come under some Charge, and then in Time to receive a Discharge, which is truly Justification. Howbeit, in disputing upon this Will of Non-imputing, it is taken up in that Sense, as if it were meant of a Will absolutely in God never in any way to impute Sin; and that Word *Imputation* is shunned, and Adam's Sin said by them to *overspread*, and be *transmitted* to his Seed. And thus when (I think) it is not intended, yet being thus taken up and improved for the Advantage of the Controversy without distinguishing; a Blind is put (perhaps) before their
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own, and (doubtless) before the Eyes of *others*. This I take it in few Words unravels this Difficulty.

But I return to the Argument. I cannot apprehend, that *That Man*, who is under the Charge, Sentence, and Curse, of the Law, is justified. Let it be considered, It is only with respect to the Law, and our Transgression of it, and the Threatening thereof against Transgressors, that we needed a Justification by the Pardon of Sins, and Imputation of Righteousness. Acts xiii. 39. *By Him all that believe are justified from ALL THINGS*, &c. that is, from All their SINS. Whatever is short of a Discharge and Freedom from Sin, and the Law, will leave us short of such a Justification as Sinners need. Justification is the Act of God, as a *Lawgiver*, according to some declared Rule. For tho' Justification be defined sometimes by those Acts which are *immanent in God*, yet he proceeding by some *external* Rule in them, they are in effect *transient*, there being some transient legal Act passing upon us, or going forth towards us, without which our Justification is not complete. This Matter is clearly stated by that Great Man Dr. Goodwin, on *Ephes.* Part 2. Page 297. "There are (saith he) immanent Acts " which lie in God's Breast, *the Lord knows who are* " *his*.—And then there are Acts, which tho' they do " reside in God's Breast, wherein notwithstanding he " doth proceed by a *Rule external*, as he is a Judge." (*I would rather say as a Lawgiver*, See *Petto* on the Covenant, p. 240.) "As now to give us the Right " to Salvation, and to acquit us from Condemnation ; " it is an Act merely in God's Breast, and consists in " *his Account* ; yet so as withal it is an Act relating to " an *External Rule* given forth, by which he doth " this, even the Rule which he hath set in his Word. " —Upon that Account there is some legal Act that " passeth in our Hearts, upon which the Lord doth, as " a Judge, acquit us." The not considering of this Distinction, the *Doctor* takes to be one Ground of
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their Mistake who are for Justification from Eternity. Hence he concludes, p. 299. that those who say, Faith only serves for a Manifestation of Justification or Salvation, are mistaken.

Two Texts chiefly are urged, and argued upon, to prove *this Eternal Will of God to be Justification*; which it is necessary to speak a little to.

The *First* is *Rom. iv. 6. 8.* compared with *Psal. xxxii. 1, 2.* *As David describeth the Blessedness of the Man to whom the Lord imputeth Righteousness without Works, &c. Blessed is the Man to whom the Lord will not impute Sin.* Here the Apostle is discoursing about Justification. And hence they urge that the Definition he gives thereof is, *God's non-imputing of Sin, and his imputing of Righteousness.* Now these are taken to be Acts immanent in God, and *Eternal*.

Ans. 1. The Apostle gives not the least Intimation that he speaks here of a Benefit which was from Eternity. He does not say whose Sins never were imputed, but whose Sins God will not impute.

2. This Non-imputation I take to be a Discharge and Freedom from the Law. It is this only which is our Justification; seeing that *Justification of Life* is opposed to and removes that *Condemnation* which came by the *Offence of one*, *Rom. v. 18.* Thus therefore I understand it: "Blessed is he who is not under the Law, but is redeemed from the Curse thereof, whose Sin is not charged thereby (or which is all one) against whom that Charge is not in Force." It is not *Θέλει ἔ λογίζεσθαι*, to whom God does *will not to impute*: But *ἔ λογίσθαι*, *will not* (in the Future Tense) *impute*. So in the *Psalms* also.

3. The Account the Apostle gives of Justification in this Context, *Rom. iv. 3—9.* is this; *Justification is an Act of God not imputing Sin, but imputing Righteousness to a Man that worketh not, but believes on him that justifies the Ungodly.* So that tho' these are immanent Acts in God's Breast, yet they do not make up the complete

complete Definition of the Apostle here without the *Object*, a Person existing, a believing Man, one whose Blessedness is *described*, not as *foreseen* by God, but as *enjoyed*, as *coming upon* the Soul. Ver. 9. Thus in these immanent Acts God proceeds by an *external* Rule, and our Justification is not complete until there be some transient Act passing out towards the Believer in Time. Sin supposes a Law, and the Transgression of it, also that the Transgressor was under it, and consequently under the Charge and Condemnation thereof. Forgiveness is the blotting out the Hand-writing, and discharging the Debtor. It is a Fruit of Peace and Atonement made with God, as Lawgiver. Whatever the Thoughts of his Heart are, he is not said to forgive, unless his Wrath is atoned, his Justice satisfied. His everlasting Love is from *himself*; but his *Reconciliation* is thro' *Christ*, and the Fruit of his Blood.

The Second Text is *Rom. viii. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect?* Which seems as much as to say, *No Elect Person can be justly charged with Sin, or All Elect Persons are free from the Charge of Sin.* The Proposition is universal.

Answ. 1. Election is often put for Selection, or separating by Calling. See *Isa. xiv. 1. Ch. xlviii. 10. Selectum efficiam te, &c. Jun. and Trem. Ezek. xx. 5. John xv. 19.* Thus it well accords with *Ver. 30.* foregoing, *Whom he CALLED, them He justified.* There's nothing justly to be laid to the Charge of God's Called ones.

2. Be it so, that *all* the Elect of God are intended (for I will not contend about it.) It is not merely in that they are *elect*ed that their Freedom lies, but in that God *justifies* them; without determining here the *Way* or the *Time* in which he does it. Whenever it is, his Justifying takes off all just Charges of *Satan*, of Conscience, of the Law, of the World. Election is not Justification, they are distinguished in *this* Text. The Apostle tells us, that God is *justifying*, ὁ δικαιῶν,

or does justify all his Elect, viz. in their Times; and this takes off all Charges.

3. Be it that all the Elect are justified, as indeed they are, *mystically* in Christ their Head; it doth not follow they were so by a Non-Imputation of Sin from Eternity. The Apostle not only brings in *God's justifying* as a Relief against all Charges, but *Christ's dying*. As it follows, *It is Christ that died*. And also his *Intercession*, to shew that our personal Justification is in virtue thereof. The Freedom from the Charge of Sin and Condemnation which the Apostle speaks of, is a Fruit of the Death of Christ, as well as of Election; and therefore is not that Eternal immanent Act of God's Will, which the Death of Christ did not at all procure.

II. A Second Way of stating Justification from Eternity is to this Purpose: *Jesus Christ was a Surety from Everlasting; and his being bound, and becoming charged, was ipso facto our Discharge*. For it could not be, that both the Surety, and the Principal, should stand charged at the same Time, for the same Debt.

Answ. 1. The Covenant of Redemption, or of Grace, as with Christ, is not that whereby Sin was charged, or laid upon Christ by the Father, and therefore is not our Discharge. I own that Christ, as our Surety, undertook on our Behalf in Eternal Covenant Transactions with the Father. But his being under the *Law of Mediation* (if it may be called a Law) must be distinguished from his being under the *Law of Creation*, or *Moral Law*, which we had transgressed. Christ's Eternal Covenant with the Father (as the Nature of the Thing declares) was, That he would become Man, would be under *that Law* which Man should transgress. Thus was he a Surety bound in due Time to pay the Debt, engaged by Covenant so to do, tho' not a Surety discharging that Office. The Charge of Sin on Christ was by the Law. And I think none should venture to say, That Christ was made under the Law from Eternity.

Eternity. I am sure the Scripture speaks otherwise, Gal. iv. 4, 5. *In the Fulness of TIME God sent forth his Son, made of a Woman, made under the Law.* Thus the Father laid on him our Iniquities, Isa. liii. 6. So that neither was he charged, or under any Imputation of Sin, neither were we discharged, from Eternity.

2. Suretiship of this Sort, bringing the Charge on Christ from Eternity, would prevent our being under the Law, and the Charge of Sin on us thereby, and consequently Redemption therefrom; for we need not be redeemed from that we were not under. But the Suretiship of Christ is the Foundation of our Redemption from the Law, and Curse thereof. CHRIST's antient Undertaking was not (to be sure) preventive of the Fall, neither of Sin and Misery thereby; but a blessed Provision made to discharge a Debt when legally contracted, and to redeem from the Law in the Threatening and Curse of it. It was only with respect to this that we needed any Redemption.

The Sum is, *That* which is a Benefit above the Fall, as *Acceptation in the Beloved*, in CHRIST our Head; again, *That* which is a Benefit above and before the Consideration of Redemption, as *God's Will of non-imputing Sin*, can't fairly lay claim to this Name of *Justification*. *That* Way which sets it on equal Ground with *Sanctification*, and other Benefits in Time, answers itself, and makes the Dispute needless and frivolous. *That* which lays it on Christ's Eternal Suretiship supposes him to be made under the Law from Eternity, which is not Truth; and us to have been discharged from the Law also from Eternity, and so never to have been under it in Time, which is a great Mistake:

To conclude, I would hint how far we may and ought to bear with others in their Thoughts about this Matter.

If any think, God's viewing his Elect in Christ, appointing him to be a Surety, his Thoughts of Mercy and Pardon founded in Infinite Eternal Love, may be called

called Justification as immanent in God, and do so call it ; whiles they own the Imputation and Charge of Sin by the Law in Time, and consequently a true Justification before God in Time, by the Application of Christ's Righteousness, they are to be borne withal, and there is no Danger in thus holding it. Yea, those who shall deny such Acts of Grace in God from Eternity, are much wider from the Truth than those who thro' Mistake call them by a wrong Name. Let Men enjoy their Thoughts about Eternal immanent Acts in God, provided these Things be held ; it should make no Breach in Brotherly Love. But because I find not so much as once the Name of Justification applied to an Eternal Act of God, unless *Rom. viii. 30.* where it is evidently meant of his Purpose and Promise in Christ, I could wish it might be disused, at least in the *Concrete*, as to say, *We were justified from Eternity.*

But now when Men think that this is the highest Attainment of Gospel-Light, to believe that we were justified from Eternity, and in consequence thereof believe there was no Charge or Imputation of Sin by the Law in Time, and that there is no *real* Justification of a Sinner before God, but only a *Manifestation* of what was actually complete before ; really this is a mighty unsafe unwarrantable way of stating Things : And however good People may be led into it, the Opinion itself is bad. Hence it would follow, that Sinners, in believing unto Righteousness, are only to persuade themselves, that they were justified *before*, even from Eternity ; which is certainly a wrong and dangerous Way of directing the Exercise of Faith in poor Souls. We must therefore consider how it is that Men hold in this Point.

The Work of the Ministers of the Gospel is not to persuade Men, that their State is good while Unconverted, and that they are justified and pardoned already. We ought not to endeavour to prevent Conversions, Awakenings, fleeing for Refuge, and closing
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with Christ as miserable condemned Sinners ; but to promote them by setting forth the Misery and Danger of a fallen State, and of continuing and dying Christless. Howbeit, the Design of the Gospel is to hold forth Hope at first, and not to drive to Despair, but to draw Souls by Cords of Love.

CHAP. II.

Of Justification in Christ, of the immediate Effects of his Death, &c.

THAT all the Elect of God were justified in Jesus Christ, their Surety and Representative, when he arose from the Dead, is a Doctrine that gives to Christ the Glory of finishing the Work he came into the World to do, secures the Honour of Grace in its absolute Freeness, and affords no small Consolation to Believers. This Truth is so sweetly and largely proved by Dr. Goodwin (*Christ set forth*, §. 3. c. 4, 5.) that I need add nothing to what he has said, but refer the Reader thereto. This doubtless is true concerning the Saints both of the Old and New Testament. The Old Testament Saints were justified before in their own Persons, yet through the virtue of that Sacrifice which was to be offered. And now in CHRIST God justified his justifying of them in their own Persons before, declaring that what was done *before*, was done thro' the Satisfaction *now* made by his Son. It was in *their Name*, on *their Account* and *Behalf*, and from *their Sins*, that Jesus Christ was justified ; the Transgressions of the Old Testament having been kept in Store for him to redeem, or satisfy for, *Heb. ix. 15.* Thus did God shew forth his Righteousness by the Remission of those Sins that were past, *Rom. iii. 25.* In

like manner, It was *in the Name*, and *on the Behalf*, and *from the Sins* of the New Testament People of God, that Jesus Christ was justified. But as *personal* Justification, and *Justification in Christ*, were clearly distinct as to the Saints of the Old Testament, so are they distinct as to the Saints of the New. As to these latter, their *personal* Justification follows in Time; and as to both, it is the Effect of their Justification *in CHRIST*.

Now that the Elect were justified in Christ when he arose from the Dead, is clear from hence :

1. *That the Lord Jesus Christ was justified from Sin, from the Charge of the Law.* That he was justified, the Scripture is express. It is one Branch of the Mystery of Godliness, 1 Tim. iii. 16. that *Christ was justified in the Spirit*. A Mystery indeed, that the holy, undefiled, sinless Son of God should be justified from the Charge of Sin, as one numbered among Transgressors. There was this Mystery in it, that he was justified from the Sins of others, and they were justified in him. He was justified *in the Spirit*, or by the Spirit, whereby he was quickened and raised from the Dead, Rom. i. 4. 1 Pet. iii. 18. It was this the Lord Christ gloried in, as he is brought in by the Prophet, Isa. l. 8. *He is near that justifies me, who will contend with me?* Ver. 9. *Who is he that shall condemn me?* Here is a Challenge made to all Enemies, Men, Devils, the Law, &c. in the Faith of God's justifying him from all Accusations and Charges, among which is the Imputation of our Sins; and it is with a holy Triumph over all. This Triumph the Apostle Paul takes up on the Behalf of God's Elect, and Christ's redeemed ones, Rom. viii. 33, 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect?* It is God that justifies. The Comfort is fetched from the same that Christ comforted himself with. For the Elect were concerned in CHRIST's Justification.

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Now if Christ was justified from Sin, it must be from our Sins, unless it were only from a false Charge, as of wicked Men, or the like; but it was from a Law-Charge of *our* Sins, for he was without Sin. This appears hence, G O D's justifying him answers to *his* laying Sin upon him. God the Father laid our Iniquity upon him. There must be a Discharge or Justifying of him. For he was *made under the Law*, *was made Sin*, *bore our Sins*, and *was made a Curse for us*, Gal. iv. 4. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 24. Gal. iii. 13. He must therefore be justified as our Surety.

Now this was not only in pursuance of the Law of Mediation, as an Acknowledgement that he had fulfilled *that*: For the Imputation of Sin to him was by the Moral Law. For he was *made under the Law*, to *redeem them that were under the Law*: It is the *same* Law which *we* were under, and are redeemed from, that CHRIST was made under. Christ then was justified from *our* Sins, which were imputed to him. And really I am very apt to understand that Text, Rom. vi. 7. to this Purpose. It may be read most agreeably to the Original, *He who died has been justified from Sin*. And so it is an Argument that we should die to Sin because Christ died for Sin, and was discharged therefrom, in the virtue whereof *we shall live with him*.

2. *The Lord Jesus Christ was justified as a common Person, as representing the whole Number of the Elect*. Unless he were a common Person, he could not answer A D A M his Type. Rom. v. 14. *Who was the Type of him that was to come*. That is, Adam was the Type of Christ. Hence the Lord Jesus Christ is called, *the Last Adam, the Second Man*, 1 Cor. xv. 45. 47. The First Man stood for all his Seed; the Second Man for all his spiritual Seed. In their Name he obeyed, in their stead he died. And when he *died* for Sin as a common Person, he was *justified* also from Sin as a common Person. And as such he took Possession of

Glory. If it were then as a common Person that Christ was justified ; his Seed, his Elect, were justified in *him* ; even as when *Adam* sinned as a common Person, all sinned in *him*, and were condemned in his Condemnation.

What Sort of Justification then is this pleaded for ? I answer, it is *Virtual*, or if you will, *Actual-Virtual*, and so opposed to *Actual-Personal*. It is *Actual* in Christ, and *Virtual* as to us. To say *Virtual Justification in Christ* is a *Pleonasm*, or speaking the same Thing twice. [*In him*] is a Limitation, and is opposed to [*In our own Persons*]. In him it is *Actual*. Therefore to speak accurately, We should say, *justified in him*, or *justified virtually* : For these are the same. Such a Justification in CHRIST cannot be denied, I verily think, without the Denial of his *Suretiship*, and the proper *Imputation* of Sin to him, and of his being a *common Person*, in dying and rising again.

Howbeit, This is not our *personal* Discharge from the Law. It doth indeed include a Discharge as in Christ our Head and Representative ; but there is somewhat further in our *Personal* Justification. I confess, this Matter is not easy to be explained. But till I can see clearer, I resolve it thus ; There is a *Discharge from the formal Obligation of the Law* ; and a *Discharge from the sentential Condemnation thereof* ; which latter respects our visible standing in the First *Adam*. The former is our Justification in *Christ*, the latter is our *personal* Justification, which is thro' Christ. We must be acquitted, discharged, and set free in our own Persons, as well as in our Head. There is moreover *Deliverance from Punishment*, which belongs to Justification. Christ hath purchased, that we be *delivered* from what is come upon us, and that what we have further deserved be *prevented*. To me it seems clear, that the State of Spiritual Death, Blindness of Mind, Hardness of Heart, &c. are Punishments, as an Execution in Part of the Curse of the Law. Now in *personal* Justification these Chains are knocked off, and
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the Soul is taken out of the Hands of the Law as to this Part of its Curse, thro' the Redemption of Christ. And he is no longer *under the Power of Sin*, because *not under the Law*, which held him there by its Curse; but *under Grace*, which justifies and frees therefrom. This, in Point of Time, is not an immediate Effect of the Death of Christ. A Discharge from the *formal Obligation* of the Law to Eternal Death and Condemnation before God is in Time an immediate Effect of Christ's Death. The Elect, for whom Christ has been condemned, can never eventually come into Condemnation. *He [hath] redeemed us from the Curse of the Law.* He came to *redeem them that were under the Law*, Gal. iii. 13. c. iv. 5. It was his Work, and he *hath* done it. The Price is paid. But the actual *Deliverance* from the Curse is the *Fruit of Redemption*. So that an elect Unbeliever being in the First Adam as to his visible and indeed real Covenant State of Sin and Misery, and as to his Nature and Frame (however secretly as to his Person standing in Christ it is otherwise) the Law hath a Sentence and Charge against him, according to the declared Rules of the Word: And in this respect the Discharge of the Debt is not formally the Discharge of the Debtor. There is not indeed a formal Obligation to Death in the Law lying upon him considered as a redeemed Person before God. But still there must be a personal Justification and Discharge in particular from that sentential Condemnation; and Freedom from Spiritual Death as the Curse of the Law.

Their *Surety* has a Discharge on the behalf of his Elect, that they shall never be required to pay their own Debt: But *they* have not a Discharge till the appointed Time. Till then the Threatening and Curse lie upon them, and *the Wrath of God* (Law-Wrath) *abides on them.* *He that believes on him is not condemned, but he that believes not is condemned already*, John iii. 18. Not adjudged to Hell as final Unbelievers are; but their whole Covenant-State in *Adam*, their State

of Unbelief, and their Persons *visibly* are condemned by the *Law*, for it is *already*, and therefore not by the *Gospel*. The Reason given, *because he has not believed on the Name of the only-begotten Son of God*, agrees to elect and redeemed Unbelievers as well as others. The *Affirmation* therefore in the former Part of this Text belongs to them, as well as the *Confirmation* in the latter.

Again, *John* iii. 36. *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting Life : And he that believeth not the Son shall not see Life ; but the Wrath of God abideth on him.* It is indeed the *final* Unbeliever who shall never see Life, and on whom the Wrath of God *abideth*. But then it is spoken in Opposition to the State of Believers, on whom this Wrath *abideth* not. And then this Word [*abideth*] signifies, that this was the common State of all. Thus this Text will prove what it is usually urged for. Spiritual Death and Law-Condensation of that State, are the Wrath that *as yet* abides on Elect Unbelievers. And it may be said, while as yet it appears not that they are Elect, that this will sink them to the lowest Hell without the Justification of Life, and quickening renewing Grace.

Having shewn that the Elect are justified in Christ, and how this differs from our personal Justification, I would (as not improper in this Place) speak a little of the *immediate Effects of CHRIST's Death*.

I think verily then it may not be denied by an *Anti-Arminian*, that the Death of Jesus Christ was an *Actual* Reconciliation and Atonement made with God, an *Actual* Satisfaction made to his Justice, an *Actual* Redemption of the Elect : Not a Redemption which might have been *insufficient*, and which upon our Fulfilling of Conditions should become *actually* and truly Redemption. It was Redemption in a way of *Price*, the Effects whereof are infallible in due Time, a personal Discharge, Deliverance from the Law and Sin, Holiness and Eternal Life. And albeit we may speak of the *Application of Redemption* in some of the Benefits
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of it ; yet it is (I conceive) by no means proper to speak of the *Application of Satisfaction* or of *Reconciliation* and *Atonement* (which are the same thing) ; for this is made *with God*, and terminates *in him* : It is therefore never applied *to us*, altho' we receive the *Fruits* and *Benefits*, and come under the Manifestations thereof.

Mr. Baxter (*Aphor. Thes. 9. p. 44.*) reckons it a mighty Difficulty to determine, what is the *immediate Effect* of the Death of Christ. And the Truth is, I know no immediate Effect of it according to his *Scheme*, unless it be *Salvability*, by the Abrogation of the *Old Law*, or laying it aside, and the Purchase of a *New Law*, that Men may save themselves by keeping thereof.

But the Matter from the Scripture is not so difficult. *Satisfaction, Reconciliation* actually made, or the *Purging of our Sins* ; an *Everlasting Righteousness* actually brought in, and prepared for God's Elect ; the *Purchase* of the *chosen Generation* ; and lastly, an *Actual Purchase* made, by the *Actual Payment* of the Price of all the *Benefits* which pertain to Salvation : These Things are *immediate Effects* of Christ's Death in point of *Time*. Regeneration, Personal Justification, Faith, Repentance, Holiness, Perseverance, Comfort, with Eternal Glory ; *These* are *immediate Effects* thereof in point of *Causality*, tho' not of *Time*. They depend upon the Death of Christ, as the sole *Meritorious Cause* of them ; not as a *remote*, but the next *immediate Cause*, tho' given in a wise *Order*, and at the *Time* appointed by the Father. *Atonement* is always reckoned in the *Levitical Law* as the immediate Effect of the Priest's offering Sacrifice for the Offender : *Lev. vi. 7.* And it is the *Blood that makes Atonement for the Soul, Ch. xvii. 11.* And shall we be doubtful whether the Blood of the *Son of God* hath this immediate Effect ? Or whether more is not ascribed to the Type, than agrees to the glorious Antitype ? When the Apostle takes it up so joyfully, with such Advantage to the Blood of

GOD. Heb. ix. 14. *How much more shall the Blood of CHRIST, &c:* For the immediate Effects of the Death of Christ, see *Dan.* ix. 24. *Matth.* iii. 17. *Col.* i. 20. *Heb.* i. 3. *Ch.* ix. 12. 26. The Purchase is made, the Price is paid both for Grace and Glory.

C H A P. III.

Of Personal Justification, or of Justification by some real Justifying Act of God at Believing.

AS I approve not the maintaining so rigidly of Justification by Faith, as to destroy or overthrow the Justification of the Elect in CHRIST their Head *before* Faith; because it is in the virtue hereof that we ever have Faith, or receive God's justifying Sentence thereby: So neither can I like such a stating and maintaining Justification *before* Faith, as excludes God's justifying Act *in* and *by* Faith on Christ.

That there is at or upon Believing some true and real Act of God towards the Soul, which is *not merely a Manifestation* of what was done before, but is *truly Justification*; this is my Work to evince in this Chapter. And,

I. I argue, *That is Justification to which the Definition of it belongs*: But the Definition of it belongs to some declared Act or Sentence of God. Dr. Ames's Definition of Justification (*Medul. Theol.* l. i. c. 27. §. 6.) seems to me both accurate and scriptural. "Justification (saith he) is a gracious Sentence of God, by which, for the Sake of Christ apprehended by Faith, he absolves a Believer from Sin and Death, and accounts him righteous unto Life." *Rom.* iii. 22. 24. He addeth, "It is the pronouncing
" of

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" of a Sentence, as the Use of the Word declares." *Prov. xvii. 15.* To which add *Deut. xxv. 1.* A Sentence of Absolution in a judiciary Way, declaring a Man just and righteous in CHRIST, is more than a manifesting an antecedent Justification. It is an actual Release, Discharge, and setting at Liberty. It is God's Act, and is a Justifying Act towards the Soul. The inward Thoughts of the Judge concerning a Criminal, are neither Condemnation, nor Justification ; but his passing or declaring Sentence according to Law, is so.

I grant, 1. That God's imputing the Righteousness of Christ, and accepting us as righteous in his Sight, are Justifying Acts of God : So that I don't say it is only a Sentence, or declared Discharge.

2. That the Righteousness of CHRIST was accepted for the Elect *before* Faith, and accounted by God as wrought out for *them*, and for no other. For as Christ fulfilled it, so the Father accepted it : But Christ fulfilled it for his Elect. God looked upon them as the Men for whom it was wrought. If this be *Imputation*, it must be owned to be *before* Faith. Nor do I know why it may not bear that Name. But this pertains to our mystical Justification in CHRIST, which is guided by the *secret* Will of God. But now God's viewing and accepting a Soul as *now* clothed with the Righteousness of CHRIST, by the *applying* Work of the Spirit ; this is Imputation which belongs to our *Personal* Justification, and follows the *revealed* Will of God concerning particular Persons. *Rom. iii. 22.* *The Righteousness of God, by Faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe.* c. iv. 23, 24. *Now it was written not for his Sake alone, that it was imputed to him ; but for us also, to whom it SHALL be imputed, if we believe, &c.* Imputation here is God's looking upon a Man as actually clothed with Christ's Righteousness, and dealing with him as one who is so, *Rom. v. 19.* *By the Obedience of one many SHALL*

be made righteous. There must be an applying Work of the Spirit, and Men may not flatter themselves, that they are justified, or shall be saved, without Faith.

3. I grant, That the Gospel-Promise or Covenant of Grace, is a declared Sentence concerning the *Elect*, as secretly they stand in CHRIST, not known to us. But moreover, there is a declared Sentence concerning *Believers* in a Gospel-Promise running to them. *Acts x. 43. Whosoever believes on him shall receive the Remission of Sins. c. xiii. 39 By him every one that believeth is justified, &c.* Here is the external Rule or Instrument of Justification, and therein the characterized Persons are Believers. This is the Sentence of God in his Word, and a declared Discharge.

Dr. Ames further teaches, *ubi Sub. §. 9.* “ This Sentence was, (1.) As it were conceived by the Decree of justifying, *Gal. iii. 8.* (2.) It was pronounced in Christ our Head, when he arose from the Dead, *2 Cor. v. 19.* (3.) It is virtually pronounced from that first Relation which arises from Faith wrought, *Rom. viii. 1.* (4.) It is expressly pronounced by the Spirit of God, witnessing with our Spirits our Reconciliation with God.” I would rather say (with Submission), This gracious Sentence is expressly and actually pronounced at first believing, tho’ not heard and perceived by the Soul, which is, when by the Spirit’s Testimony we receive in the Conscience more fully the Justifying Sentence of God. The conceiving of the Sentence in the Mind of God, this great Man doth not call Justification, but he calls it the Decree thereof. And the declaring the Sentence is that he defines to be Justification. This is ordinarily intended by the Justification of a Sinner in Scripture, and to this the Definition of Justification (as being a *Forensic Term*) doth properly belong. Here is the giving and receiving Remission, and such an Absolution passing upon the Soul as was not before, *Acts v. 31. c. x. 43.*

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II. *If there is some Justifying Act of God passing upon a Man when he believes, then that is the true and very Time of his Personal Justification.* But the former is true, therefore the latter. Here,

1. Our being in *Covenant* is the Rule and Measure of our Justification. So far as Men are under the Covenant of Grace, so far they are justified. Now God makes Covenant with Souls at Believing in their own Persons. Inviting Souls to believe and come to Christ, God promises, *Isa. lv. 3. I will make an everlasting Covenant with you.* He don't say *with Christ*, but *with you*. Which shews the Vanity of those who would have it, that God never makes Covenant with his Elect in their own Persons, but only with Christ for them, and with them, in Christ. This Covenant indeed contains *the sure Mercies of David*, those sure Covenant-Mercies given us before in Jesus Christ. Thus it is with them *thro' Christ*, but still it is with *them*. See also *Heb. viii. 8. I will make a Covenant with the House of Israel, and with the House of Judah.* So *c. x. 16. This is the Covenant that I will make with Them.* He speaks of it as a thing future. *Behold the Days come : And after those Days, saith the Lord, &c.* And it is with *them* personally. As he covenanted with Christ *for us*, so he covenants with us *thro' Christ*. Also *Rom. xi. 27.* and *thro' the Scripture.* This is that bringing into the *Bond of the Covenant*, *Ezek. xx. 37.* It is a bringing-Souls under the Influences of the Covenant of Grace, and unto a Participation of the Blessings thereof (of which Justification is one), which they possessed not before. They were indeed secretly, as involved in Christ, in the Covenant of Grace before, and so *virtually* justified, or (which is all one) justified *in him*. This (I confess) Men are backward to own, or at least, to insist upon : But it is no Contradiction to God's Covenanting with us, and justifying us by Faith.

2. Justifi-

2. Justification follows our *Union with Christ*. Now as there is a *Legal* or *Representative* Union of the Elect in Christ, which infers their being justified *in him* : So there is a *vital* and *influential* Union brought about at Believing. The Spirit's *Work* of Faith effects and brings it about ; *Believing*, or the *Act* of Faith, is the instantaneous Fruit thereof ; and *this* completes our *Marriage-Union with Christ*. Now there is no *Condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. viii. 1. It is the *vital* Union he speaks of here : For it follows, *Who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit*. To these there is no *Condemnation*. There is an *Implantation* into Christ, as the Scion is engrafted into the Stock, at the Instant of Believing. Rom. xvi. 7. *Who was in Christ before me*. 2 Cor. v. 17. *If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature*. Most certainly, this is not a mere *Manifestation* of what was before, but it is a further *Benefit* ; tho' the former will bring about the latter. For without that Union in *CHRIST* (as the *Representative* and *Represented* are One in Law), which is *before* Faith, Souls could never be vitally and savingly united *with* and *to* Christ thro' Faith.

3. Justification goes with our *Possession* of *CHRIST*. That is, All Blessings of the Covenant go with him. There is indeed a secret Gift the Father has made of Christ to all the Elect, which establishes that secret Union and Justification before pleaded for. But there is a further *Benefit*, to wit, a *having of the Son*. 1 John v. 12. *He that hath the SON, hath Life* ; which is to be interpreted by 2 John 9. There we see it is the Believer that *hath* Christ. And he that hath Christ, hath the Justification of Life. For all Grace goes *with* Christ, Rom. viii. 32. Now in none of these Instances is there only a *Manifestation* of what was before, but a *farther* Grace and *Benefit*.

4. Believers have a farther *Discharge* from the Law, and are not so under the Sentence of *Condemnation* therein as Unbelievers, tho' Elect. It is true, The
Law

Law (in a sort) condemns Men for their Sins tho' Believers : But they are not *under* the Condemnation thereof, because they are not *under the Law*. We must stand to that Rule of the Apostle, *Rom. iii. 19. What things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law*. Believers, being justified by the Gospel, are not under the Law, and so not concerned in what it saith, as to its *Threatening* and *Curse*. They are indeed under its *Precept* to Christ, *1 Cor. ix. 21.* and so are concerned in what it saith. Now Unbelievers, tho' Elect (I conceive), are under the Law in some farther Sense than Believers, *Rom. vii. 1. 4, 5, 6. Gal. iii. 10.* And tho' the Law considers Men not as Believers or Unbelievers ; yet Believers are not *under* its Condemnation. And tho' Believers have no more Advantage by the Law than Unbelievers : Yet they have this Privilege by CHRIST, that they are *redeemed* from the Law, and *delivered* from its Curse. It is all one in point of Privilege, whether the Law condemns not at all, or whether its Condemnation is turned off from the Person, that he is not at all under it, which is the Privilege only of Believers. Briefly, *Redemption* puts a Difference between some and others with respect to the Law, tho' *Election* does not. The *Application* of Redemption puts a further Difference. *Redemption* infers, and belongs to, our *Mystical* Justification in Christ. The *Application* thereof actually frees and discharges the Believer from the Law, which is our *Personal* Justification, *Gal. iii. 13. c. iv. 5.* with *Rom. vii. 6.* I distinguish therefore between being *redeemed* from the Law, and being *delivered* and freed therefrom. This latter is the *Fruit* of the former. So that tho' the Law in a sort charges and condemns all as Sinners ; yet there are some peculiarly *redeemed* therefrom ; *viz.* All the Elect : And there are some peculiarly and personally *discharged*, even All the *Called* ones of God. Then is the Law as a cancelled Bond, that tho' it speaks the same, yet it is of no Efficacy,

Efficacy. The sentential Condemnation of the Law is after a sort *in Foro Dei*, in God's Sight ; for hereon are they said to be *guilty before GOD*: And hence our Personal Justification by Faith is in the *Sight of God*, *Rom. iii. 19. Gal. iii. 11.*

5. Believers are under the justifying Discharge of the Gospel or Covenant of Grace. The New Covenant is a justifying absolving Sentence to all that are under it. *Heb. viii. 12. Ch. x. 16, 17.* I have shewn already that Believers are brought into the New Covenant, and to such a Participation of the Blessings and Benefits of it as is not the Privilege of Unbelievers. This gracious Sentence is God's pardoning Act, which Mr. Petto stands much upon in his excellent Book of the *Covenant*, Ch. 10. and 11. p. 239, &c. The justifying Sentence of the Gospel or New Covenant, which Believers are under, is opposed to that condemning Sentence which is in the Law. When Souls are brought under this Covenant, then the *filthy Garments are taken away*, and they are *cloathed with Change of Raiment*, as is represented in *Zechariah's Vision*, Ch. iii. 4. Then is such a Soul *cloathed with the Sun*, with the Righteousness of CHRIST, and so looked upon, and so dealt with, by God.

Now these several Acts (if indeed they are divers) mentioned in the foregoing Particulars are together and at once in Order of Time.

But this gives Occasion to the discussing Two Points here of no small Difficulty, which I shall do with all convenient Brevity.

Q. 1. *Whether Justification or Sanctification doth precede, and hold the first Place?* The Inquiry is concerning Justification, which is at Believing, and by Faith.

I answer, Without the Use of Terms or Names which may be disputable, the Matter (I conceive) stands thus. The Spirit of Life from *Christ*, in his Name, and in the *virtue* of his satisfying atoning Blood, comes upon the Soul, whom he finds under the Curse, held by

by the Law in Spiritual Death, and as in that State under the Sentence of Eternal Death: The Blood pleads a Discharge, the Soul must be a Prisoner no longer; this Blood and Righteousness in its Virtue and Efficacy brought home by the Spirit, or the Spirit in the virtue thereof, begets a Principle of living Faith in the Heart, which immediately, being led and guided by the Spirit, looks to the Obedience and Blood of Christ for Pardon of Sin, Acceptance with God, a healed Conscience, and Eternal Life: Thus believing on him, the Soul stands under the discharging Sentence of the Covenant of Grace, which *justifies him that believes in Jesus*. It is in the Virtue of forgiving Grace that we are quickened when dead. *Col. ii. 12, 13. Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12. I will put my Laws into their Mind, &c. FOR their Sins and Iniquities I will remember no more.* We have not first Faith, and so obtain the Righteousness of CHRIST as somewhat at a Distance from us; But that *Righteousness is brought nigh, and thro' it we obtain precious Faith, 2 Pet. i. 1.*

There is then some justifying Act of God at the very Time of Conversion which *precedes* all Acts of Faith, and that is bringing nigh the Righteousness of Christ, opening the Prison-doors, and absolving from the Curse of Spiritual Death. This Part of Justification may be called *Constitutive*.

There is also a justifying Act which in Order of Nature *follows* Faith, and this is the Sentence of the New Covenant, discharging, acquitting, and declaring righteous. Thus the Covenant of Grace is the Charter, Deed, or Instrument, of Justification. And this Part thereof may be called *Declarative*. Not because it *only declares* a Man justified: For Justification is truly, and according to Scripture, defined thereby.

Now so far as Justification precedes Faith, so far it does precede Sanctification, and (I think) no farther. And how far Faith is the Instrument of, or goes before Justification; doubtless so far Sanctification-goes before Justification.

Justification. For Faith belongs to the New Creature, and is a Branch of Sanctification as truly as Love, or any other Grace. Howbeit, as God first received the Atonement at the Hand of *Christ*, and then gives us his *Spirit*; and as *Christ* first acted towards God as a *Priest* making Peace with him, and then towards us as a *Prophet* and *King* to subdue us to God; so Faith, following the same Order, first looks to the *Priesthood*, then to the *Kingly* Office of *Christ*. O the Blood of *CHRIST* for Pardon, is that which the trembling guilty Soul wants! And then comes in a Conviction how Sin and *Satan* must be dethroned, and *Christ's* Kingdom set up in the Heart. Faith, so soon as wrought, acts towards the Blood of *Jesus* to receive the justifying Sentence of God; then it turns inward, and as a Principle of Sanctification purifies the Heart and Life. *Rom. iii. 25. Faith in his Blood, Acts xv. 9. Faith that purifies the Heart.*

Justification then, as it is the Application of the Righteousness of *Christ*, in the Spirit's working Faith, hath an unbelieving *ungodly* Man for its Object: As it is an Acquittance or declaring Righteous, so it has a *Believer* for its Object. *Rom. iv. 5. God who justifies the Ungodly. c. iii. 26. The Justifier of him who believes in Jesus.* But neither of these is adequately and fully Justification without the other. Nor is there any Interval of Time between them. The Inquiry, *Whether Justification or Sanctification be first*, is not necessarily concerning Time, but the Order of Nature, and Connexion of the things themselves. Nor is it concerning *Progressive* Sanctification but *Initial*, viz. a *Sanctifying Work* of the Spirit or Regeneration.

While this is strictly kept to, and those Justifying Acts of God which are *before* Faith are allowed, it ought to be no more offensive to say (which *Dr. Goodwin* maintains) that Sanctification precedes Justification, than when the Apostle sets *Calling* first, *Whom he called, them he also justified*, *Rom. viii. 30.* A Sanctifying

Justifying Work cannot be *separated*, nay, nor *distinguished* from Effectual Calling, or the Work of Faith.

Yet because Men are apt to think that *that* which precedes hath some *causal Influence* upon that which follows ; and because Sanctification is mostly understood of a *Progressive Work* ; and lastly, because Faith first looks to the *Blood* of Christ, and thence fetches Virtue to *purify* the Heart : It is necessary to speak of Justification as preceding Sanctification. Our Justification hath a *causal Influence* into our Sanctification ; but Sanctification hath not a *causal Influence* into Justification. The Application of Christ's Righteousness has an Influence even into *initial* Sanctification ; it is in the Virtue of the Justifying Righteousness of Christ now applied, that any Soul believes. The justifying, acquitting Sentence itself received by Faith, has an Influence into *Progressive* Sanctification, tho' I think in Order of Nature, it follows *Calling* or the *Work* of Faith.

Therefore when Men by *Sanctification* going *first*, mean, that it is in prt our Justifying Righteousness, and that Justification depends thereon, it is injurious to Grace, and I'll not grant it them in that Sense : But when it is intended only that Personal Justification completed follows Calling in Order of Nature, I agree thereto : But God's Gift and applying of Christ is before our receiving him, and his revealing Christ's Righteousness before our apprehending it, in Order of Nature.

Q. 2. *Whether a Believer is at once justified from all Sins, even from those which are future, or hereafter to be committed ?*

Ans. Dr. Ames has very well stated this Matter. *Med. Theol.* c. 27. §. 23, 24, 25. " The Sins of the justified (saith he) are remitted, not only those that are past, but also, in some sort, those that are to come. *Numb.* xxiii. 25. *He beholdeth not Iniquity in Jacob, nor seeth Perverseness in Israel, because Ju-*
D d
" stification

“ justification leaves no Place to Condemnation, *John v.*
 “ 24. *He that believeth hath Eternal Life, and shall*
 “ *not come into Condemnation*, and certainly and im-
 “ mediately entitles to Eternal Life. Also all that
 “ Remission which was in Christ prepared for us,
 “ Justification makes it actually ours ; neither can Sins
 “ past and present be wholly and fully remitted, unless
 “ also those which are future be in some sort remitted.
 “ This is nevertheless the Difference, that Sins past
 “ are remitted by formal Application, but future vir-
 “ tually only : Sins past, in themselves ; Sins future, in
 “ the Subject or Person sinning. Nevertheless Re-
 “ mission of Sins is asked daily by the justified. (1.) Be-
 “ cause the Continuation of this Grace is necessary to
 “ them. (2.) That the Sense and Manifestation of
 “ it may be more and more perceived, as particular
 “ Sins require. (3.) That the Execution of that
 “ Sentence, which was pronounced in Justification it-
 “ self, may be ripened and promoted.” Whether we
 say, Future Sins are pardoned *virtually*, or a *Pardon is*
laid in with respect to them, or that they are pardoned
actually of Course as they are actually committed ; it
 comes much to one, and there ought to be Allowance
 for Mens different way of Expression. But,

1. If God charges and imputes future Sins, which
 are present to him, when he justifies a Sinner from past
 Sins, then the Believer is not perfectly justified in his
 Sight. This I can by no means grant. It makes
 Justification imperfect and gradual. But when they are
 present to the Eye of his Omniscience, they stand not
 before the Eye of his vindictive Justice, nor ever shall.
Blessed is he whose Transgression is forgiven, whose Sin
is covered, Blessed is the Man to whom the Lord im-
puteth not Iniquity. Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. Here is Trans-
 gression, Sin, and Iniquity ; these are found with
 Believers while in the Body. He does not say, *Blessed*
is the Man that transgresseth not ; for who should then
 have the Blessing ? But, *whose Transgression is forgiven.*

And

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And *whose Sin is covered.* Is it a Blessedness that a Man's Sins are covered from other Mens Eyes, or from the Eyes of other Creatures? Not at all. From whose Eyes then will you say? From GOD's Eye, I boldly say, or else there is no *Blessedness* in it. And let him that cavils tell me, whose Eye he takes it to be. When the Righteousness of Christ therefore covers their Sins past and present, is not the same sufficient to cover those which are future? Do *they* lie open to the Eye of God's vindictive Justice? Then it is but an *imperfect* Blessedness. Again, when God *imputeth not Iniquity*, he imputes *no* Iniquity. If this is not *perfectly* so, there is no *perfect* Blessedness, which yet the *Psalmist* so glories in. Our future Sins are present to God, and does he impute them? No, if we believe in Jesus, we are not justified before him by halves.

2. If when such Sins be actually committed, they then lie charged, or not pardoned, for some time, *viz.* till Faith and Repentance are renewed; then is there an Intercision or Interruption of Justification. This also may not be granted; yet this some contend for. It doth not suffice to say, that all *former* Sins are pardoned: For *one* Sin charged makes a Breach upon a Man's Justification, and doth as really condemn to Hell as many. Justification is not *complete*, but imperfect, is not *continued*, but interrupted, if *one* Sin stands charged. Against this Charge of Sin I argue,

(1.) *A Believer is not under the Law.* Rom. vi. 14. Gal. v. 18. I would only ask whether one that is in Christ is under the Law in its Rigour, as a Law of Works? Again, By what Law is Sin imputed to a Believer? There's no *Medium* between Sin being imputed, and being justified from it. I say, tho' a Believer sin, he is not under the Law, in the Interval between the Commission of Sin, and the Exercise of Faith and Repentance. If he is under the Law, he is under the *Condemnation* thereof for that Sin. But he who once believes in Truth, never

more comes into Condemnation, *John* v. 24. Otherwise the Case of Believers is the same as that of Unbelievers; unjustified and unpardoned as to *that* Sin; and there may be a Complication of Sins, of many dreadful Sins, before Grace prevails again, as in *David's* Case. Nay, when he sins daily, he will be every Day unpardoned, as to such Sins, for a time; and I see no Reason why lesser Sins should not require Faith and Repentance for Pardon as well as greater: But alas! our daily Sins are not always of the smallest Size. Farther, a Believer cannot be sure he is altogether pardoned and justified, if he doubt of the Truth of his Repentance as to this particular Sin.

(2.) *A Believer is under the Covenant of Grace*, Tho' he sin, he does not fall out of Covenant. It is impossible then, that Sin should be imputed, or not pardoned, for the least Moment of Time, when that Covenant is or includes a justifying Sentence as to all Sins. *Their Sins, and their Iniquities* (saith God), *I will remember no more*, *Heb.* viii. 12. meaning all to their Lives end. O this is the Privilege of the Believer, he is not *under the Law, but under Grace!*

Object. *But if Future Sin be pardoned, or in Effect so, that whenever it is committed, it is actually remitted, then may we take Liberty to sin, and live at any Rate.*

Ans. It follows no more than (1.) If we are *elected*, we shall be saved, and need not care how we live. It is a good Answer, We know not our Election, but by being Called and found in the Way of Holiness. Nor do we know the Forgiveness of our Sins, without the Exercise of Faith and Repentance. (2.) If we are sure of the *Continuance* of God's Love, and of *Perseverance* to the End, then we may be careless and live in Sins. Thus carnal unrenewed Reason will argue; but they who believe the Love of God, the Continuation thereof, and the Security of his well-ordered Covenant, do know these to be the Truths of God, and the greatest Engagements unto Love and Obedience.

ence. (3.) If we are sure Provision is made in the Covenant of Grace for the Remission of Sins, and that they shall surely be forgiven to them who once believe in Truth; there's altogether as much in *this* to give a Liberty to sin, as to say they are *already* forgiven. Especially when it is granted,

1. That when Believers fall into Sin, it is not forgiven to the *Conscience*, that they should have *Joy and Peace*, till the Exercise of *Faith and Repentance*. They will not be able comfortably to conclude it. As for those who talk, They need not be troubled, nor concerned, nor repent, and yet may conclude they are pardoned; they will find this a sad and pernicious Mistake, if they persist therein.

2. That God *corrects and chastises his People for their Sins*, Psal. xxxix. 11. and lxxxix. 30, 31, 32, 33. As to that Correction which God will visit his People with, their Sins are not forgiven before, nor so soon as committed, nor it may be, as repented of. But this being a Dispensation of *Love* in the *New Covenant* from a *Father's Hand*, and working for *Good* thro' the Purchase of Christ, there's no Reason to say on this Account, that their Sins are unpardoned as to the *Law and Justice* of God, which have no *Charge* against them. It is very much with respect to this Dispensation of *Chastisement* that we pray, *Forgive us our Debts*; and that our Father will *not forgive us, unless we forgive others*. Also those whose Hearts are not disposed by the Grace of the Gospel to Love and Forgiveness, will be found at last to have had no Part in God's forgiving Grace.

I have somewhat diverted from what I was upon; with a Hint of which I conclude this *Section*. There is a *Real Justification* upon Believing, which was not before. There is a Pardoning Justifying *Act* of God, with respect to which every Unbeliever is unjustified, and that even in God's Sight; as Christ was not justified in God's Sight, whilst *under the Curse* for us.

Now they who would oppose this must shew, either that there are no such Acts of God, as implanting into Christ, giving the Soul Possession of him, translating from under the Law, and bringing a Soul under the Grace of the New Covenant, and declaring him righteous in the Righteousness of Christ applied; or else, that these Acts are not Justification. Otherwise it will hold, that there is a Justification by Faith before God, and not only in the Conscience, nor merely a Manifestation of what was before. Less than this cannot be intended by those Expressions; *I will make Covenant with them: I will forgive: Righteousness shall be imputed: Many SHALL be made righteous: By him all that believe are justified: And, I will not remember thy Sins any more.* Sure it is good and safe to keep to Scripture-Language, and we ought to be very wary of any thing that is injurious thereto.



SECTION II.

Of the Offer of CHRIST to Sinners; of the Invitation of Sinners to Christ; of Exhortations to Sinners in the Gospel.

CHAP. I.

Of Offers of CHRIST.

WHILE the foregoing Work in this Second Part was upon my Hand, Mr. Hussy, Pastor of the Church of Christ in Cambridge, put forth his Book

Everlasting Gospel, vindicated. 39

Book against Mr. *Hunt*, intituled, *The Glory of Christ unveiled*; wherein he opposeth the Offering of Christ to Sinners in the Gospel, and by Consequence, all Invitations of Sinners to Christ, and Exhortations to believe, &c. This being a practical Point, and excluding one Branch of ministerial Work, I thought it necessary to appear in Defence of what I take to be the Truth herein; and either to hold forth or receive Light from the Word of God hereabout. With due Deference therefore to the Ability and Learning of this Brother, my Senior both in the Ministry, and in Years;

I begin with the Point of *Offers*: My Method shall be (under the Divine Assistance) to *explain* what I intend; to *defend* what I shall have so explained; and to *answer Objections*. Under this last Head I shall principally have respect to this Author.

The Ministers of the Congregational Persuasion (which both Mr. *Hussey* and I profess) in and about London, in their *Declaration against Antinomian Errors*, printed 1699. p. 41. lay it down as an Error in them that hold it, tho' falsely charged on themselves; viz. 'That Ministers of the Gospel ought not to propound the OFFERS of Salvation unto all those to whom God calls them to preach, seriously inviting them to improve the Means of Grace, that they may be saved; and assuring them, in the Way of their Ministerial Duty, of the Salvation of all such as believe in Christ; because they want Ability to close with the Offer, and all shall not be saved.' This Declaration Mr. *Hussey*, p. 648. is exceedingly offended with. I wish he had shewn more of a Christian Temper, and had treated those he opposed (at least) as Brethren. For what more Hurt in them unitedly to state and explain their Judgment (without imposing on any Man's Conscience), and this against false Charges, than for him to do the like, with a very great Air of Assurance and Opposition; not to say, Authority? In

the same Page, he gives this Challenge, *Let me see what Congregational Minister in the Kingdom, strictly and holily such*—will stand by this *Arminian* Position; viz. *That Ministers of the Gospel ought to propound the Offers of Salvation unto all those to whom God calls them to preach, &c.* I'll not challenge to myself the Qualification he calls for; For *behold I am vile, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes*: But according to the Grace given me of Christ, I shall endeavour to defend this, which I don't take to be an *Arminian* Position.

I. To explain this Matter therefore, I would shew,
(1.) What is not. (2.) What is intended by Offering Christ to Sinners.

(1.) For the *Negative*.

1. That the Heart of the *Offerer*; viz. God and Christ is equally affected towards the many to whom the Offer is made; this is not intended. Amongst Men when something is equally offered unto many, it seems to intimate that the Heart of the Offerer stands equally affected towards all to whom the Offer is made. But here it is for the *Elects* Sake, that the indefinite Offer is made. God's Heart is towards *them* in a Way of special Love.

2. That the *Offer* is properly conditional, and the *Thing offered* not absolutely a Gift, is not intended neither. In earthly Things, where something is offered to many, but some Act to be done is to determine the Possession or Enjoyment to one of those many, the Offer is *conditional*, and the Thing offered *not a free Gift*. Our Acceptance (which is all that God calls for) is not the Condition determining the Enjoyment to one, rather than to another; but his *Will* determines it, whose Grace, Power, and free Gift, enables some to accept. And tho' this required Acceptance has the true suspending Nature of a Condition to the Non-Elect; yet it shall not be a Suspension as to the Elect; for God comes and gives the Gift

Gift of Christ, and gives the accepting Heart, even the Gift of Faith; and his Gift is before our receiving Act, and is the Cause of it.

3. That the *Persons* to whom the Offer is made have Power of themselves to accept, and that it is of their own Will that they do so; is not the Meaning of offering Christ neither. An Offer of any thing made among Men, ordinarily supposeth this. If these Things which I have denied were intended by Offers of Christ, the first would bring in *Universal Grace*; the Second a *Covenant of Works*; and the Third would introduce *Free-Will*. And what needs an *Arminian* desire more?

4. The Essence of the Gospel doth not lie in an Offer of Christ, I only say it includes an Offer; but the Essence thereof is Free Promise, Free Grace and Free Gift. God does not stand, wilt thou? Wilt thou? And there leave it, by an Offer to the Creature's Will. But positively gives Christ, and works the Will by his Spirit. Men may carry this Offering Doctrine too far: As, if they insist *altogether* upon the Offer; or intimate that the Offer *prevails* with Souls (whereas it is the Gift of God, and the Work of the Holy Spirit doth that), or, neglect the *Peremptory* Terms of the Covenant, *I will*, and *ye shall*. When there is therefore an Offer only to others Wills, and they are left to that; there is more than an Offer as to the *Elect*; but when there is *more*, it does not follow, that there is not *this*; nor yet, that the Spirit of God doth not work by *this*.

(2.) For the *Positive*. What is this Gospel-Offer of Christ to Souls? I am to define it, as it is common to the Elect with others, where the Gospel comes.

Ans. *It is the proposing and setting forth of Jesus Christ for Acceptance*. He that denies the Gospel to contain an Offer of Christ, shall be forced to deny this. But will any Minister of Christ deny it? Again, he that owns this, shall be forced to own the Preach-

ing

ing of the Gospel to be an Offering of Christ. What tho' none of those Things denied before are necessarily supposed, nor are at all included herein? The Gospel may hold forth an Offer of Christ notwithstanding, and doth so, according to this Account of it, *A proposing of Christ for Acceptance*. Here is, (1.) A Declaration concerning Christ in his Person, Office, and Performances. (2.) A Publishing of God's revealed Will to be, that Men should believe on him, or *accept* of him. (3.) That they may freely so do. (4.) That they who do so shall be saved by him. Here is the Offer of Salvation. This is what I mean, and this is all I defend in this Matter.

II. I am to *Defend and Prove* this Point thus explained. But need I to do it, when it is self-evident, and when it has been the current Language of the greatest *Anti Arminians*? It seems it is not amiss.

Therefore, that the Preaching of Christ in the Gospel has the Nature of an Offer, and is truly such, appears from the following Particulars.

1. In the Gospel God *sets forth and proposeth Jesus Christ for Acceptance*. This I would prove, and let my Opponent choose, whether he will deny *this to be so*, or deny *this to be an Offer*. We have the Witness of all the Three in Heaven, Thus and thus hath Christ done, obeyed and suffered, &c. 1 John v. 6, 7. It is the Father's revealed Will and Command, that Men should accept of his Son, and believe on him, 1 John iii. 23. *This is MY SON, hear him*, Matth. xvii. 5. Again, *Behold me, behold me* (saith Christ), Isa. lxxv. i. *stretching out his Hand all the Day long*. And as the *Holy Ghost* saith, *To-day if ye will hear his Voice. A Saviour, a Saviour*, is the loud Proclamation of the Gospel. Christ is *set forth* by God the Father in the Gospel, as a propitiatory Sacrifice to be believed in; which may be the Meaning of Rom. iii. 25. as well as that he was fore-ordained (according to the Margin). He was *set forth* (as an Object of Faith) *evidently as crucified*,

crucified, among the Galatians, Gal. iii. 1. whether they savingly believed or no. Besides, what is *preaching* Christ to a People, or a Soul in particular, where the Minister knows nothing of their Election? Is not this a holding forth Christ for Acceptance, and a *setting Hope* before them? Heb. vi. *Acts* iii. 20. *q. d.* He shall send Christ to be your Judge, of whom you once had a Tender in the Gospel. Again, *Mark* xvi. 15. *Preach the Gospel to every Creature.* What good News is this, if there is nothing of an Offer, or Invitation, if Christ is not proposed to be accepted? And this is not to the Elect only, but to others. Compare *Colos.* i. 25, and 28. Hence they are said to be *evangelized* where the Gospel comes, *Acts* viii. 40. *ἐγγελεῖτο.*

2. In the Gospel *Christ is lifted up*, as *Moses* lifted up the Brazen Serpent upon the Pole, *John* iii. 14. It is true, the *lifting up* here, primarily respects his Crucifixion (*John* viii. 28.); yet includes the *preaching* Christ crucified, which is a setting him forth (as it were) to the View of Sinners. For it is, That *Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* v. 15, 16. Besides *Doctrinals*, and distinguishing Truths, we have this blessed *Encouragement* to propose unto Men. How did *Peter* wind up his *Doctrinals* to *Cornelius*, his Neighbours and Kindred, *Acts* x. 37—43. ? Even thus, — *Whosoever believeth on him, shall receive Remission of Sins.* This, saith he, is testified to by all the Prophets. So *Paul* issues his Sermon, *Acts* xiii. 38, 39. — *Be it known unto You—that through this Man is PREACHED [unto you] the Forgiveness of Sins. And by him all that believe are justified, &c.* What did *Paul* mean, unto you is preached Forgiveness? Did he mean, *You are forgiven*; or that Forgiveness was held forth, and offered to them? Did not God offer Healing to the stung *Israelites* by the Brazen Serpent? So, *whosoever believes on Christ shall not perish.* How are Souls to take it who know not whether they are Elect or otherwise, but as a Tender of Christ and Salvation

Salvation with him, on no other Terms than the Receiving all freely? This believing also is an immediate Duty, unless any will say, that Unbelief is not an immediate Sin.

3. An Invitation to a Feast (suppose a Marriage-Dinner or Supper) is an Offer of a Participation of the Provision there made. In the Gospel is such an Invitation, *Mat. xxii. 2—10.* Who will come to this Marriage-Feast? Who will feed upon Christ?

4. The Gospel proposeth the heavenly *Canaan* to Souls, in such sort as the earthly *Canaan* was proposed to the People of *Israel*. I speak not strictly of the Terms, but of the Nature of the Proposal. See *Heb. iii. 12, 13. 18, 19.* Compare *c. iv. 1, 2, 3. 6.* Here is a *Promise left us, viz.* upon Record, set before us in the Gospel, that *all who believe shall be saved. Unto us was the Gospel preached.* We have been evangelized as well as they; *viz.* by this Proposal of the heavenly *Canaan*, as they were by the earthly. So *v. 6. They to whom it was first preached,* or as in the Margin, *to whom the Gospel was first preached, viz.* The same Gospel in Type, with ours in the Antitype. Now see *Deut. i. 8. Behold I have set the Land before you; go in and possess it.* This was while they were yet in the Wilderness. *v. 19.* Again, *v. 21. Behold the Lord thy God hath set the Land before thee, &c.* It was to be enjoyed and possessed *in the way* of Faith and Obedience, though not *for* them. Unbelief came and cut them short. So it doth many that have the Gospel preached to them; of which the Apostle warns the *Hebrews*. In *Mat. xix. 21. Go sell that thou hast—and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven.* What hurt to say, that Christ offered him another Treasure, better than his earthly? And is not the same thing done in the Gospel daily? But when Heaven is set before Men, and all the Glory and Happiness of the World to come, it is not, say they, worth fighting, striving, running for; nor worth denying all for. Thus it draws out a Discovery

covery of the prodigious Folly and Wickedness of the Heart.

5. The Gospel must be first preached, and Christ be first proposed and set forth unto the *Jews*. Thus was the Apostle's Commission, *Luke xxiv. 47.* Thus it was meet it should be, *Acts xiii. 46.* Also *Chap. iii. 25.* *Unto them first God sent his Son Jesus; viz. in the Preaching of the Gospel.* Was not this for *Acceptance*? And (to speak as Men) to know (*Deut. viii. 2.*) whether they would accept it or no? Was here no *Tender* of Christ, no *Offer* of Grace and Salvation? This Gospel, when slighted by them, was brought to the *Gentiles*, *Acts xiii. 46. c. xxviii. 28.* So that if it were an *Offer* to *them*, it is so to *us*.

6. Where the Issue is, either choosing or refusing a proposed Advantage or Benefit, there was an *Offer*. Some choose Christ. So *Mary* (*Luke x. 42.*) Some refuse him. *Luke xix. 27.* So the *Jews* did; and are accountable for so doing. When the Gospel is preached, God will have it told to Men, who his Son is, what he has done, and what Benefits he brings: And now, saith he, Soul, is he worth thy *Acceptance*? See, what thou wilt say. He is *worthy of all Acceptation*: Dost thou think him so? They all practically return some Answer. Some being left to themselves, refuse him: Others divinely taught of the Father, choose him. And Christ acknowledges *this* in them, altho' it is of himself. *Mary hath chosen, &c. Theirs* is an After-Choice, for *his* goes first, (*Joh. xv. 16.*) Yet a *Choice* it is; or (if you had rather) a *Consent*, embracing this tendered and freely given Jesus.

7. The Free Tender of Christ is the Soul's Warrant for receiving him. Otherwise we may ask, *Quo Warranto*? What Warrant have they? It will be said, the Free Gift; is not that Warrant enough? I answer, but no Man knows this, that *Christ is given to me*, but by the Witness of the Spirit in the Heart. Now there must be a Warrant in the *Word*, as well as in the *Heart*.

Heart. As in the Matter of *Obedience*. It is not the Internal Working of the Spirit, that gives our Actions the formal Nature of Duty or Obedience ; tho' they cannot be otherwise, if he guides and enables thereto ; but their Respect unto the External Rule in the Word. Again, I demand, whether this Proposition, *Whosoever believes on him shall not perish, &c.* be not a sufficient Warrant to me, and to another, for Believing in Christ ? I confess I took it to be so, in believing (I hope) on the Son of God. And if it be so (as most assuredly it is), I ask again, whether it is not therefore so, because this [*whosoever*] is an *Offer unto me*, that is, that there is not only Leave given, but a Command that I believe, and a Promise that so doing I shall have Eternal Life. Or let any Man shew me another Reason, why here is such a Warrant contained : Or how any thing can be so without such a [*whosoever*] or indefinite Tender ? The Command of Believing, where it is not to the Elect only, comes to the same thing.

III. I am to answer *Objections* against all offering of Christ in the Gospel. I shall gather up those of Mr. *Hussey*, as near as I can, under the following Heads.

I. *This Notion of Offers is not fitted to a firm Belief of Election—because here it is Grace given, under the Positive Work of God the Spirit, must come in where the Gospel is preached to the Elect of God, not Grace offered.* Mr. *Hussey* against Hunt, p. 545.

Answ. It offers no Prejudice at all to the Doctrine of Election. Nor is the *Offer* of Christ any more contrary hereto, than the *Preaching* of Christ to Sinners. For what is the *Preaching* of Christ to a Non-Elect Sinner ? Is it not some sort of *Encouraging the poor Sinner to believe* ? A Phrase used in another Case, by this Author, p. 508. If he means any besides an Elect Sinner, what sort of Encouragement is it, where Christ and Salvation are not at all offered ? But the Truth is, this Objection runs against the *Preaching* of Christ, save to the Elect only. Grace given to the Elect,

Elect, is first Grace *tendered* by the Gospel to them with others. Grace as given, actually conferred by the Spirit, is to the Elect only. And if this only is to be preached, I must turn the *Whoever believes shall be saved*, into this Form, *The Elect shall believe, and be saved*. This is true, but what is this to that Encouragement which the Gospel holds forth to Sinners without distinguishing Elect from Non-Elect? If any thing more therefore is to be preached than the positive Gift of Christ to the Elect, it is an Offer, or general Encouragement to believe, repent, and be saved. This I am sure is the Scripture-Way. Upon what Ground therefore Mr. *Hussey* shall defend the Preaching of Christ indefinitely, I will defend, *That in the Gospel is an Offer of Christ*, in the Sense explained, consistently with the Doctrine of Election.

2. *This Doctrine of the Offers of Grace is no way fitted to any firm Belief of the Doctrine of a Non-Election of Persons; yea, utterly repugnant to it. Can they do more than the Elect to take Offers of Grace?* p. 545, 546. *Answ.* If he preaches Christ to any other but the Elect, seeing there is no absolute Promise or Gift to the Non-Elect, it can be no other than in Effect an Offer of Salvation, upon and thro' Believing. A Minister cannot address himself to a particular Person or Persons, who are yet in Unbelief, either as Elect or Non-Elect. What then must he not preach Christ to them? Not entering into this Secret we may safely preach as *Paul* to the *Jaylor*, *Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved*. We have nothing to do to discern or distinguish *Vessels of Wrath*, or *Vessels of Mercy* in preaching Christ to Men. We have no Hope nor Aim to save the Non-Elect; but use all Means of God's appointing, that *the Elect may obtain the Salvation which is in Christ Jesus*, viz. already prepared: Amongst which I reckon the preaching, proposing and tendering of Christ freely. For their Sakes is this designed, and carried on, but who knows them, till

till they are enabled by Grace to accept Christ freely offered to them? When I *offer Christ to all within the Sound*; here is Christ, Souls, a sweet Saviour. Whoever thirst come and drink. I *firmly believe Election, and keep it in my Eye*, knowing that *as many as are ordained to Eternal Life*, and no more, *shall close with this tendered Jesus*, not as merely an Offer, but as the Gift of God. I *stedfastly believe particular Grace*, and that *lodged in the Holy Ghost's Hand to bestow on none but the Elect*: Nor is the *Tendering of Christ* any Contradiction hereto, any more than a *Preaching of Christ to all*, seeing that is a holding him forth for Acceptance.

3. *Offers seem to be prejudicial to the positive Work of the Spirit, and the absolute Gift of God therein.* Answ. Not at all; for some are left to their own Choice, and these are sure to refuse Christ; others are determined by Divine Grace, and enabled by Divine Power in a *Day of Power* to choose him. It is not a *bare Offer* to the *Elect*, and left there. For what hinders, why the same thing that is *proposed* to many, may not be *given* to some? While the Offer *warrants* their Reception, and the Gift *enables* them thereto.

4. *This Doctrine of Offers seems to exalt the Creature's Power, by laying all shamefully upon Ministerial Offers of Grace, and Terms of Grace, which are but the Congregations human Endeavours, to accept of the Offers of Grace.* Answ. Tho' we *preach Christ* as Preaching is the Means of Faith, yet there is no Necessity that we lay all thereon. And when the *Preaching of Christ* is *for the Obedience of Faith*, human Endeavours need not be exalted out of their due Place. But I may touch that Point again under another Head. In the mean time, I take what is quoted from Dr. Goodwin in the forementioned Declaration, p. 42—46. to be according to the Mind of Christ, and shall do so, till I see it solidly disproved. It is all of Grace and of God who worketh in us, yet there is a *labouring* which
is

is warrantable and commanded. See *John* vi. 27. 2 *Cor.* v. 9. *Heb.* iv. 11.

On the other hand ; if no Power naturally for receiving is supposed, then an Offer is but to mock one ; *it only lays the thing before me under invincible Impediments of reaching it, as holding out my Hand with Money to a poor Prisoner that looks thro' a Grate and begs, but can't come near me—but if I go up to him, and give it him, he hath it presently.* *Ans.* The Comparison is lame, for the poor Man in Prison is willing to receive the Offer but cannot. But the poor Sinner cannot because he is unwilling. Here the Tender is made unto the *Will*, but it is not so in the *Simile* brought. And the Truth is, it is but an *Arminian* Objection, endeavouring to fasten an Absurdity upon the Offering of Christ where Men *cannot* receive him. But the Question in the Tender is, Soul, *wilt thou receive Christ ?* This shall answer God's End of proving and discovering what is in Man, what a Rebel he is, and rendering Gospel Rejectors inexcusable.

5. Another Offence that seems to be taken is, *that such a general Offer supposes Terms of Grace, or some Condition whereon the Offer must be made.*

Ans. This is in Part already answered. And (1.) I grant that Christ is to be *proposed* in that (as it were) conditional Form. Christ is thine, if thou wilt have him, or take him to be thine. His Righteousness is thine, if thou believe. Again, If thou believe on Christ, submit to his Mercy, repent of thy Sins, thou shalt be saved. On the other hand, He that believeth not shall be damned. [*If*] in *Grammar* is a conditional Particle. And no Man ought to be offended at this Way of proposing Christ and Salvation. It runs thro' the whole Scripture. (2.) There is however no Condition of *receiving* Christ : As to say, on such Conditions I may receive him. But he is to be taken freely, as he is freely given. Christ is a Saviour, and I am a Sinner, and therefore qualified for him in that

Office. I see and feel myself a Sinner, and therefore come at God's Command, and take him as my Saviour. *Submission* to his Righteousness, Government, and divine Teachings, are ingrediential in this receiving Christ, and not *Terms* thereof. *Obedience* is consequent thereupon. (3.) This *take and have* is no Condition, no Legal or Federal Condition. No Man accounts it so, in any Matter. It is really no Condition, to have a Thing for the taking. See then the Condition, even to have Christ *freely*, to *take* him as a *Gift*. Thus it is a *free Offer*. Yet (4.) Because of the Averfation of Man's Will from this taking of Christ in his whole Salvation as a Gift, and of his Righteousness as a Gift of Grace ; hence it comes to pass, that there is a Suspension of the Benefit as to those who receive not Christ. I say, not because that receiving is to them who do receive, a Condition of their enjoying Christ properly speaking ; but from the *Nature of the Thing* ; non-receiving has a suspending Nature ; because no Man who obstinately refuses Christ, has him, and *that* all Men left to themselves will do. A great Man offers himself, and with himself his All, freely and absolutely in Marriage to a poor Woman ; she utterly refuses it : He offers himself to another no otherwise qualified ; she thankfully accepts it. Here's no Condition, but all is free. The Offer was free to the Refuser : Yet there was a Suspension from the *Nature* of the Thing : There must be a Consent. The Match was free to her that closed with it. (5.) This *as it were* conditional Proposal of Christ, and of Salvation by Christ, is not the Form or Essence of the Covenant of Grace. The Covenant is not made with all to whom Christ is preached. No such Matter. The Covenant itself runs in Promises, and in absolute Terms. But because Ministers know not the Elect from others ; and because Men know not themselves to be so, but by believing ; and because God would hold forth Encouragement to Sinners under the Gospel ; tho' they don't know themselves

selves to be elect; he would have it thus proposed, *If thou believest*, and *Whosoever believes*, &c. In the mean time, he comes and works it in his Elect, which shews it is not a proper Condition, which ought to be performed by him of whom it is required.

As to the Synod of *Dort*, whom Mr. *Hussey*, p. 648. mentions, I don't find that they were any thing against, but expressly for, the offering of Christ in the Gospel to Sinners. He should have quoted the Place or Places he had respect unto. I shall not stand to transcribe from them, finding I am like to go beyond my intended Bounds: But shall refer Mr. *Hussey*, and who else is pleased to inquire, to some Passages which clearly shew the Mind of that famous Assembly *, in this Matter.

Having reconciled this Doctrine with that of particular *Election*, it is with the same Labour done as to particular *Redemption*. I therefore dismiss this Point.

Only would hint, I contend not, that Ministers must needs use such a Form of Words, *I offer you Christ and Salvation*: But the Preaching of Christ, in the *Nature of the thing itself*, is such an Offer. Nor is the Gospel merely an Offer. The Essence thereof is a *Declaration* concerning, and a *Promise* of Christ, and Life by him. I only say, it includes an Offer in it; or that its *Indefinite* Proposal unto Men is such. Another's Dislike or Disuse of the Word, so far as it is not *Syllabically* in the Scriptures, shall be no Offence to me, provided he lays before Souls the Indefinite Encouragement of the Gospel, as well as preach the positive and absolute Grace of God and Christ to the Elect. Nor ought my using of it to offend him, when it is no more than his *Preaching* or *Proposing* Christ, which (I hope) will be allowed.

* *Vid. Acta Synod. Dordrech. 4to. Hanoviae 1620. Pag. 352. Art. 5. and 645. Thes. 1. Part II. Pag. 156. § 3. and p. 173. upon the Article of Universal Redemption.*

C H A P. II.

Of the Invitation of Souls to Christ.

AND must it be proved that this is in the Gospel, and a Part of the Work of the Ministers thereof? *You insist much* (says Mr. Hufsey, p. 140.) *in the applicatory Part of Preaching, upon coming to Christ, &c.* and then adds, that they *lay not open the Springs of that Motion.* Answer. If some miscarry in the Managing, is the thing therefore to be rejected? I have learned from 2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20. that there are two Parts of a Minister's Work. (1.) *A Declaration* of what God and Christ have done in Reconciliation made by Christ, V. 18, 19. (2.) *An Invitation* to accept it, made with greatest Earnestness, V. 20. It was the Ministry committed to them *before* they preached to these *Corinthians*, and which had been their Work in Preaching to them, whereof he puts them in mind. And now (saith he) — *As tho' God did beseech by us, we pray* (viz. Men, V. 11. *We persuade Men*) *in Christ's stead*, as, for Instance, while we speak to you, *be ye reconciled to God*: Thus we preach to Sinners. Another Part of the Application is to Believers, c. vi. 1. *that ye receive not the Grace of God in vain.* This offers no Violence to the Doctrines of Grace, for God himself works with his Servants herein.

Nor can I think but that Text, *Mat. xi. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, is an Invitation to a Spiritual Coming by a Saving Faith. Mr. Hufsey, p. 139. and 446, 447. thinks it respects outward Attendance on the Means. But saith Christ, V. 27. *I am the Messias*, the Son of the Father, known of him, and by whom alone he is known; and therefore *as such, come unto me.* He speaks to the Multitudes, V. 7. *whose Legs* had brought them to him. And why should this [*come*] have

have a particular Meaning here from all the *Comes* in the New Testament, that are at all parallel? Coming is Believing. I own the *Labouring* here is under the Bondage of the Law, as a burdensome Worship, I add also a Labouring for Life by the Works of it, in vain. *Isa.* lv. 2. Nor do I think that labouring under a Sense of Sin is excluded. But Christ proposeth himself as a *Soul-Saviour* for *Soul-Rest*, and therein lay his Work and Employment. It is therefore a suitable Coming that is intended. Bodily Rest from *Mosaic Burdens* is but *additional*. Besides, the Experience of many Souls under their Troubles and Conflicts, finding it a sweet Invitation to a spiritual coming to Christ, bears Testimony to this Interpretation: And doubtless it *stands upon Record* for Usefulness, as well as it might be so when it was spoken by our Lord Jesus.

Again, *John* vii. 37—*Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any Man thirst, let him come to me and drink.* If any thirst for Happiness, tho' seeking it in mistaken Objects where it is not to be had, let him come from them to me, and drink to Satisfaction. Here it is evident, as my Brother *Hussey* saith, *they are not forbid to come in their Sins; but [invited] to come as they are, thirsty, tho' never so defiled.* This Text, and that in *Isa.* lv. 1. (compare also *V.* 2.) invite *SINNERS* to come to Christ in their Filthinesses, and withal in the Spots and Sins their discerning Faith hath discovered to be in their old Adam's Nature. I think therefore this Brother does not mean to deny that there are Invitations in the Scripture, nor to expose ALL ministerial Invitations as an *Imposing on the Captive Soul the Task of Coming*, p. 139. For if Christ by himself, as in this Text, and in his Word, invites Souls; why may not those who negotiate an Embassy for him, do the like? *2 Cor.* v. 20. Πρεσβευομεν.

Lastly, *Rev.* xxii. 17. *And the Spirit and the Bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst, come: And whosoever will, let*

him come and take the *Water of Life* freely. See Mr. *Hussey*, p. 662. Be it so, that the *Water of Life* here doth ultimately intend, and reach unto, the *New Jerusalem* Glory not yet revealed ; this I oppose not myself unto ; yet this hindereth not, that the Invitation respects all Ages. As I have a considerable Time taken it, and still do, that the Invitation to the Marriage-Supper, *Mat. xxii.* is Language adapted to that glorious State of Things, even the *Marriage-Supper of the Lamb*, when his *Wife* hath made herself ready, (*Rev. xix. 7.*) ; yet this was an Invitation of the *Jews* in their Day, and of others under the Gospel in their respective Ages : So I understand this Text in the *Revelation* : Yet so that *drinking* of the *Water of Life* respects those Prelibations and Fore-tastes that Believers have here, as well as the full and large Draught at last. Nor is it a Visional Representation of some Scene to be opened at last. The whole Book is here drawing to a Close, and he speaks *de præsenti* as to all contained therein, *V. 16. I Jesus have sent mine Angel,—I AM the Root and Offspring of David, &c. And the Spirit and Bride SAY, &c.* With respect to this glorious Conclusion of things, the Spirit in the Word, and by his Power, in the Heart, and the Bride also, say come. ‘ *O come, taste and see, &c. Whosoever will,* and a Will he must have, and that Will must be given him, or he will not come ; let him come, who feels any Movings, Desires, or Inclinations, to the Glory of the Bridegroom and Bride ; here it is free, let him take it freely.’ There is no pre-occupating or taking up Time future, as visionally present, for ought I see, in this Text. Thus I have not wholly pulled down Mr. *Hussey’s* Exposition, and yet have established that which he would overthrow.

Gospel-Invitations in the Hand of the Spirit of God are exceeding sweet and useful : Not as an *imposed Task* : To set Men to *work* for Life, is one thing, and to *invite* them to Jesus Christ for Life, for Grace, for Strength,

Strength, for every thing, is another ; but as these express the Heart, the Grace and Love of Christ, to a poor Soul, that is saying, May such an one as I come ? And come as I am ? And will he accept of me ? O now such a Word of Christ, when he finds it to be *his Voice, Come unto me !* how sweet and satisfying is it !

Yez, here lies the Soul's *Warrant* in coming and believing. Nor do I see else what *Warrant* he has herein. But being invited and called, he may come with Boldness. As in the Case of the blind Man, to whom it was said, *Be of good comfort, rise, he calleth thee.* Mark x. 49.

CHAP. III.

Of Exhortations unto Sinners in Preaching the Gospel.

ALTHO' this is a Point nearly allied to the foregoing, yet I have reserved somewhat to be spoken here. I will not be positive how far Mr. *Hussey* rejects Exhortations to *unrenewed* Sinners ; but if I mistake him not, he is against *exhorting such unto Acts of Spiritual Life*, as to believe, to repent, &c. And against *exhorting them to such Duties, and good Works*, as ought to follow Faith. But is much for encouraging of Souls to sit under the Gospel of Christ, whereby the Spirit of God works for bringing of Souls to Christ.

I. Touching the Exhorting of Sinners yet in Unbelief to Faith, &c. ' *There are many others* (saith ' Mr. *Hussey*) *in great Zeal* (it is pity it should be separated from Knowledge) *who press unrenewed Sinners to come to Christ*, c. 7. §. 3. I know not what Emphasis may be in the Word [*Press*] in this Sentence.

And I grant the *Pressing* may be carried too far ; as in such Expressions, O that I could persuade you to believe ! O what a Wonder it is Souls don't flock in to Christ ! O couldst thou look in at Hell-gates ! &c. with innumerable the like, which Men do or may be able to use. As if Moral Suasion could prevail, or such Arguments were at all adapted to carry the Day. Exhortations need not be carried to this Degree of Pressing. We ought *also* to inculcate, that it is *God must persuade Japhet to dwell in the Tents of Shem*. Again, We ought to consider whether the Matter that we are upon will bear an Exhortation to Unbelievers ; and not blindly run into the Form of an Exhortation to Sinners, as distinguished from Saints ; and so perhaps exhort them to *make their Peace with God*, in Prejudice of the Redeemer's Work ; or *to be born again*, in Prejudice of the Holy Ghost's Work. We may as well say, *a Word to Sinners*, and so waving the Form, speak the Holy Ghost's Words, and not our own. I say, we may not exhort Men to take any Part of Christ's Work, or of the Holy Ghost's Work, into their Hands. For this is a Robbing God to enrich the Creature, who ought to be abased, *that the Lord alone may be exalted*, Isa. ii. 11.

Howbeit, I think, that *Sinners, as such, are to be exhorted to believe in Christ, and to repent of Sin*. And thus to exhort I think to be my Duty.

1. *Because this is Scriptural*, and according to the Practice of John Baptist, upon the Dawn of the Gospel, and of Christ himself, and his Apostles. This was John's Doctrine, *repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*, Mat. iii. 2. The Saviour is come ; here is a very great Gospel-Encouragement to Repentance. Doubtless they were not all Believers, but rather Unbelievers, to whom he preached this. We have Christ also himself preaching the same Words, *Mat. iv. 17*. Again, the Kingdom of God is at hand ; *Repent ye, and believe the Gospel*, Mark i. 15, which

which is called his *Preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God*, v. 14. Come we to the Apostles of our Lord. I insist not on *Peter's* Exhortation, *Acts* ii. 38. Nor on *Paul's* to the *Sailor*, c. xvi. 31. because perhaps it will be said, they were clearly under a Work of God already. But no such thing appears in that other of *Peter*, *Acts* iii. 19. *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your Sins may be blotted out, &c.* See also c. xvii. 30. *God now commandeth all Men every-where to repent.* Yea, in this lay a great Part of *Paul's* Work, to testify both to the *Jews*, and also to the *Greeks*, *Repentance towards God*, and *Faith towards our Lord Jesus*, c. 20, 21. To those undoubtedly who had not yet repented nor believed. These things, I confess, must be kept upon the *Doctrinal* Foundation of the Person, Office, Performances, and Love of Christ, according to the apostolical Example also.

2. If Inability to perform without the Spirit's Operation, were a Ground of not exhorting Men to Spiritual Duty; it lies as much against Exhortations to Believers, as to Unbelievers: Because they can no more *spiritually* perform any Duty without the actual Concurrence of the Spirit, than the Unbeliever can, without the Spirit working habitual Grace. 'Actual Grace (saith Dr. *Twiss*, *Vind. Grat. Lib. 2. Part 1. Dig. 2. c. 3. p. 356.*) actually concurring to every good Act, is necessarily required as Light is to seeing. And that Opinion concerning Actual Grace necessarily required, as concurring to every good Act, doth obtain at this Day, almost amongst all the Learned.' I wish it were still so; but it is far otherwise since his Day. Yet, tho' this is true, the Epistles are full of Warnings, Admonitions, Exhortations, and Motives, to Professors, and visible Believers, who, according to Man's Judgment, were in the Way of Salvation, yet not all savingly renewed, and so there was Danger of their drawing back, fainting, and falling short. *2 Cor.* xi. 2, 3. *Gal.* iv. 19, 20.
Col.

Col. i. 28, 29. Heb. iii. 7,—19. ch. iv. 1, 2. 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2. The Apostle therefore expresses a Jealousy and Fear concerning them, and *warns* of Sin, *exhorts* to Duty, and *stirreth up* to Diligence; and all this, to be sure, in a Consistency with the Doctrines of Grace: For the Spirit works by his Ministers this Way.

3. When Faith and Repentance are the Spirit's Work, *Believing* and *Repenting* are our Acts. Thus we take not the Spirit's Work into our Hand, nor exhort others so to do herein. *With the Heart Man believeth*, Rom. x. 10. So it is *Man* repenteth. Hence it is that Men are exhorted to believe and repent, as that which is their *Duty*, tho' they have no *Strength* thereto.

4. This sets out to Souls whose Hearts are touched under the Word, what their Work and Duty is: And this the Spirit blesteth for Encouragement unto, and a Means of, Faith and Repentance. While *Peter* said, *Repent, and be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ*, Acts ii. 38. And *Paul*, *Believe, &c. and thou shalt be saved*; the Holy Ghost discovered this to be their Duty, encouraged and enabled them thereunto. Thus therefore I ought to preach to Sinners under the Word, not knowing whose Hearts God has touched, or will touch.

5. Surely it cannot be questioned but that Family-Instruction in Admonition and Exhortation is an incumbent Duty on Fathers and Masters of Families; and if this is a Minister's Duty towards those he has the Care of in his Private, it is doubtless so in his Publick Capacity. Because both are founded in the same Reason, *viz.* That it is an appointed Means for Soul-good.

II. Touching *Duties, and good Works, which must follow Faith, that they may have any Spiritual Good in them.* I know not certainly what is my Brother *Huffey's* Judgment touching Exhortation to these; tho' I take it, that he is against it. I'll briefly declare my own Thoughts on this Point, and it may be, he

he may concur with me herein. I say then, to harp continually upon this String of good Works, to make that the main *Theme* in Preaching, is an high Affront to God in all his Persons, to the Office of the Mediator and Comforter; and introduces a Covenant of Works: Nor can Souls thrive under such a Ministry. If our Works are made preparatory for Christ; or joined with his Righteousness in justifying; or Christ is made a Preparation (as I may say) or procuring Cause that our Duties should justify us; all these are great Abominations.

On the other hand, The Person of Christ, and Faith on him by the Spirit, must still be preached. That Works before Faith are polluted and sinful, and have no special Acceptance with God; that Faith on Christ as a *Priest* is the Foundation of all our Obedience to him as a *King*; must be inculcated. O here lies God's Order, to bring a Soul to Christ, and then he is brought to Holiness! *Man's* Order is to bring him to Holiness, that he may come to Christ. But this is to try to wash the *Ethiopian* white. I marvel where Men would be washed, that they might be less filthy, before they come to the *Fountain opened*.

YET Ministers must bear their Testimony against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men; and give Warning, that the End of these Things is Death; and as they see Occasion, mix their Doctrine of Christ with Reasonings of *Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come*, Acts xxiv. 25. Works of Justice and Charity are incumbent on all Men. Yet are these Things to be urged, not aiming at an outward Reformation, to rest there; but to make Men see their *Need of Christ*. For the same Reason must the Sinfulness and Insufficiency of their own Righteousness be set before them. Good Works may bring some Temporal Reward, and be a lessening of Future Condemnation, comparatively to those who take an unbridled Course of sinning; unless so far as they are set up in
Opposition

Opposition to the Righteousness of Christ, for hereby a greater Degree of Sinfulness is added to them. These Things will warrant an *Exhortation* to Unbelievers, duly managed, unto Duties : Which is as necessary, as it is also to teach, That *good Works before Faith have the Nature of Sin*. Thus should these Doctrines be kept in a Balance, and be insisted on in their *Turn*, and in their proper *Place*.

Also Duties that have the Nature of Means to somewhat further, when the Spirit of God will work in them and by them, ought to be attended, and therefore Souls ought to be exhorted to them. Such are Hearing and Reading the Word and Prayer. When there is an Opportunity of learning the Mind and Will of God in and from his *Word*, and Men neglect it ; Jesus Christ will require it another Day. And as to *Prayer*, it is certainly the Duty of all to pray, as well as join therein with others. But remember that to pray acceptably, thou must pray in the Name of Jesus Christ, and by the Assistance of the Holy Spirit. Pray therefore for that blessed Spirit. Thou art not to stay to be assured that thou hast the Spirit first. But dost thou feel a Want of Christ and of his Spirit, and dost thou desire them ? Thou art to pray, and wilt pray : Otherwise thou wilt be content to live Prayerless still. I am not for pressing Men into the Form and External Performances ; but for leading them into a Sense of the Want of Christ, and Desires after him. Men got into a Form and Round of Duty, are never a whit the nearer to Christ, but mostly the greater Enemies to his Righteousness. But is it not the Duty of all to pray ? Yes, it is. But learn to come with a Sense of Want, and with Desires *Christ-ward*. What need we answer this Case of Conscience to any other than those who feel a Need of Christ ? Thy *Sense*, and thy *Desires*, it may be, are yet Natural : But what is begun a Natural Act may be turned into a Spiritual, while it is upon thy Hand. The Spirit may so far *own his own Ordinance*,

Everlasting Gospel, *vindicated*. 61

Ordinance, tho' not thy *Performance*. Therefore set about the *Work*, not to be thy Saviour, but to seek the Saviour.

Moreover, I see not but that Sinners ought to endeavour to believe, and to repent, and turn to God by Christ, and to pray for Help therein. If they ought to believe, they ought to use their utmost Endeavours thereunto. They ought to take into their Consideration, by their Natural Faculties, their lost State in the First *Adam*, the Encouragements there are to believe in Christ, the Necessity there is of Repentance. Nor can they answer the Neglect hereof another Day.

It will be said, This is the Old *Adam*, no better than mere Nature. I confess it, in a Sort. Yet it is not Old *Adam's* Way of Life, that Souls are directed to, but to seek it by *Faith*. And in *Fact*, I believe there is a Touch of the Spirit in some common Work, even to draw out the Natural Faculties, else Men go not so far. And in a Saving Work, the Spirit of God deals with us as Creatures endued with such Faculties, and works upon them, and draws them forth, in the mean time setting up a Principle altogether new; and those only are Spiritual Acts which flow from that Principle. But Men are altogether inexcusable in not stirring up themselves, and inquiring after the Way of Salvation; tho' God has not tied himself to any natural Endeavours.

III. Touching *Motives*, whereby to enforce such Exhortations proposed to Souls. It matters not whether they are called *Motives* or *Considerations*, or by some other Name. It is true, there may be a mis-managing in any Part of the Work of the Gospel: But *That Exhortations to Faith and Repentance* (which I have now vindicated) *may be enforced with such Considerations and Arguments as, under a Divine Blessing, have a Tendency to excite and stir up Souls unto such Duties*, I would now evince.

I. We make Use of Arguments with GOD in Prayer.

2. The

2. The Spirit of God *in the Scripture* makes Use of such Arguments and Enforcements.

3. The Spirit of God, by and in the Word, makes Use of such Considerations *in the Work of Faith on Souls.*

1. *Believers do make Use of Arguments with GOD in Prayer.* And in them, the Spirit of God assisting, lies the Strength of Prayer. *Gen. xxxii. 9. 12. Num. xiv. 13—59.* Surely this is not contrary to *Election*, or any of the Doctrines of *Grace*. It is certain, God hath already appointed what he will do. But he dispenses many Mercies *in Answer to Prayer*. It is true, *This establisheth the Doctrines of Grace.* For if it were of the Will of Man, and not of God's Free Gift (which includeth his Purpose and Grace), what should we come to him for, and beg the Things we want? This I am (thro' Grace) well aware of. And let the Patrons of Free-Will answer their Mockery to God in Prayer, unless they own all to be of *him*, and from *him*. And therefore also *we persuade Men*, because there is an *Election of Grace*, to be prevailed upon by the Gospel of Christ, and who *shall* obtain. If it were not so, I would have done, I would lay down Preaching. We should labour *in vain*, and run *in vain*. The Success of our Labour stands upon Ten thousand times a firmer Bottom here, than if it were left to the Uncertainty of Man's Free-will; if I may call it uncertain, when it is certain no Man would come in to Christ, if left thereto. We use Arguments with *God* in Prayer, and that on the Behalf of Souls; and may use Arguments with *Men* in Preaching. In the former we do and (many times) must lay aside the Consideration of God's secret Decrees; Who knows but God may be entreated? And so in the latter, who knows but these are chosen Vessels? We'll try, if *God will persuade them.*

2. But no further to insist on this; The *Two* other of these Arguments will be hinted at, and made good, under

under *each* of the two following *Common Places*, whence *Motives* in Preaching are fetched.

1. Some are suited to *allure, draw, and encourage*, Souls unto and in Believing and Repenting Work. I think verily such Forms of Speech may and ought to be used in Preaching the Word; Soul, if thou believest, if thou repentest, and turnest to God, if thou comest in to Christ; He will receive thee, He will pardon thee, and thou shalt be saved. Not that in the Duty He requires a *Condition* intitling to the Blessing (there lies the Mistake): But in the Blessing he proposeth an *Encouragement* to the Duty. I think I some time enjoyed the Presence of God (thro' his Free Grace) in thus opening and speaking unto that Text, Isa. lv. 7. *Let the Wicked forsake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* O here is a white Flag of Mercy and Pardon hung forth (as Dr. Goodwin's Phrase is) to invite in, and entice Rebellious ones to Christ! The forsaking is not the Condition of the Pardon, but the Pardon is an Allurement to the forsaking. It was thus I understood it, and proposed this abundant Mercy and Pardon to win upon Souls to forsake their Way, &c. It is not the Way of Profaneness only, but of Self-Righteousness, and Christ-abasing, Self-advancing Thoughts, that are intended. And thus God proposes Things as it were conditionally sometimes, when he don't intend to suspend the Blessing upon the commanded Duty. See *Zech. vi. 15.* Never tell me, that *that* Man has not *already* obtained Mercy, who *now* forsakes his wicked Way, and unrighteous Thoughts.

Innumerable almost are the Encouragements held forth in the Gospel, taken from the *Ability, Fulness, Suitableness, Love, Loveliness, &c.* of Jesus Christ; which some time endeared him unto me, and (I hope) drew my Heart to him. And why these Things may not be proposed, as enforcing an Exhortation in the

Applicatory

Applicatory Part of Preaching, as well as taught in a *Doctrinal* Way, I see not. Not that I think them less effectual in the *Doctrinal* Part. The Subject also that is handled may suggest many other Considerations, which I leave for those to find who are skilful in handling the Word.

2. Other Considerations are *Awakening*, and suited to *stir up Souls out of Security*. For the Spirit works by what Means are suited to such an End; whether it is to *convince of Sin, of Righteousness* [the way of Justification] or of *Judgment* [the Necessity of a Work of Grace, *John* xvi. 8. *Mat.* xii. 20.] I know that no Man is converted by Terror: And yet do believe the Spirit of God uses the Law in Conversion, to convince of Sin, and to shew the Insufficiency of a Self-righteousness, to shew the Danger of an unbelieving State, &c. Nor do we altogether deliver our own Souls, if that Part of the Message is withheld, *He that believeth not shall be damned*, *Mark* xvi. 16. The Misery and Danger of an unconverted State, and of the Ways of Sin, ought to be laid before Men. For tho' Souls are not frightened or driven to Christ, but drawn; yet are they made to see their *Need* of him, so as to *flee for Refuge to this Hope set before them*, *Heb.* vi. 18. Indeed the Gospel, and the Hope there is in Christ, are to be so early proposed as to *prevent* despairing Thoughts, and lying under a Spirit of Bondage; yet must Souls know, that there is no escaping for such as *neglect this great Salvation*. The Grace and Love of Christ is the most noble Theme in Divinity: Nothing so sweet to him that preaches, nor to them that hear, *if so be they have tasted that the Lord is gracious*: For then they will not say, *Here was nothing for Sinners*, as is the usual Talk, unless they hear a Covenant of Works. This is therefore the great and main Work of those, who have their Denomination from Preaching of the Gospel, *Ministers of the Gospel*, and not of the Law, *of the Spirit, not of the Letter; to publish Peace, to bring*
good

Everlasting Gospel, vindicated. 65

good Tidings of Good, to publish Salvation, &c. Isa. lii. 7. And those Discourses which hold forth more the Evil, Desert, and Wages of Sin, should have Mixtures of this sweet Gospel. Nor do I see any Ground to think that Souls must be terrified or humbled to such or such a *Degree*, or held the least Moment of Time under the Bondage of the *Law*, before they may lay hold of the Comfort of the *Gospel*. *Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*, holds forth Encouragement and Hope at the very first. The Grace of the Gospel must be the Spring and Source of true Repentance. *This* may melt the Heart with a Sense of the Evil of Sin, that never was touched with that Sense before. But when the Gospel is the *Instrument* hereof, the Law is the *Rule* to judge of Sin by. And in a Declension from this Rule, lies the Sinfulness of our Actions. The Law therefore must be preached, to subserve the Spirit's Design of *Convincing of Sin*. For without the *Law is no Knowledge of Sin*; because *where no Law is, there is no Transgression*.

Our Lord Jesus Christ in *Matth.* v. vi. and vii. Chapters, had been preaching a Sermon to his Disciples on the Mount. And how does he conclude it? See *v.* 21. to the 28. He tells them a Profession would not do to carry them to Heaven. That many fruitless Pleas would be made at the Last Day by fruitless Professors, to whom he would say, *I never knew you, depart from me ye that work Iniquity*. He admonishes them of the Happiness and Safety of those who hear his Sayings, and do them; which is set forth by a *Wise Man who built his House upon a Rock*: Of the Misery and Danger of those who hear his Sayings, and do them not; set forth by a *Foolish Man, who built his House upon the Sand*; which fell in a stormy Day. Need we then an Apology for using such a Method?

When *Paul* had preached an excellent Sermon concerning Jesus Christ our Lord, in *Acts* xiii. He winds up with a Word of Use, bringing it as near as might

be to the Consciences of his Hearers, v. 38. *Be it known unto you therefore—that thro' this Man is preached unto you the Forgiveness of Sins*; q. d. Whether you hear, or whether you forbear, know, and take Notice of it, Christ hath been preached TO YOU. And you shall not be able to deny it another Day, but shall be left inexcusable, if you continue Opposers of the Gospel. He goes on, v. 39. *And by him all that believe are justified from all Things, &c.* q. d. Consider the Advantage of Believing, and Happiness of Believers. *Moses's Law* cannot do that for you, which Christ can do. *Beware therefore* (addeth he, v. 40, 41.) *lest that come upon you which is spoken of in the Prophets, Behold, ye Despisers, and wonder and perish, &c.* q. d. There is such a Prophecy; take heed lest you be the Men in whom it shall be fulfilled: If you are found Despisers, you will perish for ever. These Motives did *Paul* use, and thus did he set the *Danger* before them, tho' he well knew that it must be the pardoning justifying Grace mentioned before, which must draw them, if they were brought to Jesus Christ.

Further, that the Spirit of God hath made use of the Consideration of Death, of Judgment, of the Terror of God's Wrath, of the Worth of the Soul, and Weight of Eternal Things, in a saving Work; and that the Beginning of the Work hath ordinarily been in, or accompanied with, a quick and lively Sense of these things on the Soul; is so evident, as not to need any Proof. This I suppose is known in almost all Churches, who receive their Members, as the Church at *Jerusalem* did *Saul*, viz. upon a Relation of their Conversion. Hereunto also the Three Thousand who were pricked at the Heart, and cried out, *what shall we do?* and the Jailor, who cried out, *What shall I do to be saved?* are Witnesses. Let the Experiences of Believers be inquired into, in this Matter. Now what Considerations the Spirit of God works by for Good to Souls (at least sometimes) those ought to be proposed

proposed by the Ministers of the Gospel (and I think too) as *Motives* to strengthen their Exhortations unto Faith and Repentance.

Dr. Owen on *Heb. ii. 2. p. 172.* speaking somewhat largely of the Usefulness of Gospel-Threatenings, addeth, that ' They have been observed to have had an ' effectual Ministry, both unto Conversion and Edification, who have been made wise and dextrous in ' managing Gospel-Comminations towards the Consciences of their Hearers.' I agree to what I take to be his Meaning, tho' not to the Term of Gospel-Threatenings.

IV. As an Appendix to this Chapter, I cannot but testify my Dislike of some Forms of Exhortation that are in Use. As, *Make your Peace with God*; See that you fulfil the Conditions of the Covenant, &c. to which I add, Men's Directions for Conversion, and such-like.

I. It is too frequent a Phrase with many, *Make your Peace with God.* And, *have you made your Peace with God?*

I. This Phrase is *unscriptural*. Where do we find such an Exhortation to unrenewed Sinners? For it is supposed by them who use this Form, that they are yet Enemies to God, and perhaps that he is an Enemy to them, to whom such Exhortation is made. I know that Text in *Isa. xxvii. 5. Or let him take hold of my Strength, that he may make Peace with me, and he shall make Peace with me,* will be urged in Defence of the censured Expression. But (1.) Were it granted that this is spoken to Men; it should seem to be spoken to God's Vineyard, to his Israel, that were in a State of Reconciliation, as *v. 4. Fury is not in me.* And then the *making Peace* respects not a State of Enmity, but only some Controversy between God and them, bringing on *Fatherly Chastisement.* And thus it will not warrant such an Exhortation to Unbelievers. (2.) But this seems not to me to be the Meaning; but that the great Peace-maker is here intended, even *Jesus Christ.*

For how comes it about faith God, that *Fury is not in me*? It is not that any Creature or Creature-Endeavours can hold my Hands. They would be as *Briars and Thorns* that I would burn up. v. 4. Or [if Fury be in me] *let him* (the Anointed Man, *Jehovah's* Fellow) *take hold of my Strength*, my Arm, metonymically, that I strike not Sinners dead. See Mr. *Pool's* Annotations. When my Anger is kindled a little, let him ward off the Blow. Thus Dr. *Goodwin* (as I remember) somewhere interprets, *He shall make Peace to me, Peace he shall make to me*. Heb. It is Peace God-ward, by Satisfaction made to him. Or if it be, *Let him make Peace*, it is much one; so you understand it of him who could make Peace. There was no *HIM* spoken of before this Verse, but the *Vineyard*, which is a Body Collective; and the *Briars and Thorns*, V. 3, 4. But let *HIM* take hold, &c. (3.). Or if any had rather interpret, *Let him*, that is, *my People*, take hold of my Strength; if they are afraid of my Displeasure, let them run and take hold of the *Man of my right Hand*, of him who is my Arm and my Power, *He shall make Peace with me*, Psal. lxxx. 17. Isa. liii. 1. I Cor. i. 24. Still *Christ* is the *Peace-maker*. If any still object, and will be their own Peace-makers, let them tell me, who that [HE] is, v. 6. *He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take Root*, &c. It is doubtless the same, of whom it is twice here said, *He shall make Peace, He shall make Peace*. For [that] and [and] are supplied; tho' not to so much Disadvantage as we have an [if] supplied in *Hos. vi. 3. Then shall we know [if] we follow on to know the Lord*. It is a Prophecy of *Christ*, and of Gospel Days, and it is an absolute Promise in both the Branches of it. *We shall know*, and *we shall follow on to know the Lord*, increasing more and more in that good Knowledge. That [if] spoils the Glory of that Text. But this by the Way.

2. This

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2. This Expression, *Make your Peace with God*, is *Anti-scriptural*. It is *against* the Scripture. For, (1.) It detracts from the Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Glory of his Office as Mediator and Peace-maker. See *Lev. xvii. 11.* The Design of the Scripture is to glorify the Lord Jesus. And therein he has the Glory of being the only Peace-maker, given to Him. *This is my beloved Son* (saith the Father, *Mat. iii. 17.*) *in whom I am well pleased.* And *he is our Peace*; who reconciles both [Jews and Gentiles] unto God, in one Body, by the Cross, *Eph. ii. 14. 16.* This Honour is sacred to him. It is one of the bright Jewels in his Crown, that he was able to make *Peace with God* on the behalf of Sinners. (2.) It advances the Creature into the Place of *Christ*, ascribing to the Offender the peculiar Work of the Mediator. *Make your Peace*, certainly puts this Work of the Days-man into the Hand of other Men. So that here are these *Two great Evils*. Now the Design of the Scripture is to abase the Creature, especially in so tender a Point as this, where Christ must be *All in All*.

3. This Form, *make your Peace*, teaches Sinners that their Peace is not made, and sends them to make their Peace by human Endeavours, and not by Faith to a Peace already made by Jesus Christ. We are not indeed to conceal the Holiness, Justice, and Terror of the Lord, his Wrath against Sin and Sinners as an offended Lawgiver; and yet may consistently teach, That Christ has not only made God *reconcilable*, but hath made *Reconciliation*. Nay, the former is not true, for God is *reconcilable* antecedent to Christ's Performances; how else did he give Christ? What then! Shall we give Christ nothing? The Scripture is plain: It was the Work he came for, and so foretold by *Daniel*, *c. ix. 24.* *to make Reconciliation for Iniquity.* Doubtless then he fulfilled it. For it was to be done within the *Seventy Weeks*. Yea, *the Lord IS well-pleased for his Righteousness Sake*, *Isa. xlii. 21.* Here's the Ground

of his well-pleasedness. The *Controversies* that God has with his People in his *Dispensations* are of another Consideration; and yet are issued by the Lord Jesus Christ as an *Advocate* with the Father. Again, *having made Peace by the Blood of his Cross*. Col. i. 21. as a Work already done. He *had by himself purged our Sins*, Heb. i. 3. before *he sat down on the Right Hand of God*. And *obtained eternal Redemption*, before he entered in once into the Holy Place. c. ix. 12. If this Matter should admit of any Debate (which yet it ought not) it will be certain notwithstanding, that our Peace is made (when ever it is) by the Virtue of *Christ's Blood and Advocacy*. But I think it invades the Prerogative of Christ to deny that he *has* done this for all his Elect, and to send Sinners to do what he hath done. It leads them out the Way of Faith into the Way of Works. It misguides them in believing, and keeps them under Terror, when they think of *making Peace*, and see not that *Peace is made* by Christ.

4. I might argue by an *Induction* of all those things (if one could think of them) whereby it may be imagined that Sinners should make their Peace. But *will the Lord be pleased with Thousands of Rams, or Ten thousands of Rivers of Oil? Shall one give the First-born for the Transgression, &c.?* Mic. vi. 7, 8. You'll say, *to do justly, to love Mercy, to walk humbly with God*, is that which he requires, and which the Prophet answers here. I answer, With these he is *pleased* as materially good, and as spiritually so where they are spiritually performed (in this they are considered merely as *Objects*) but by these he is not *appeased*, as coming in the stead of the Thousands of Rams, and all Old Testament Offerings and Sacrifices, which the only Sacrifice of the Son of God does (and is considered as an *Efficient Meritorious Cause* of Peace with God). Think of what you will, and it is insufficient. *Faith* itself does no more than take hold of *Christ* for Peace already made. *Wherewith then shall I come before God,*
and

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and bow myself before the high God, to make my Peace with him?

Objection. We mean no such thing as to lessen the Glory of Christ as *Peace-maker*; but this we mean, *Secure an Interest in Christ, and thereby Peace with God, make it sure to your own Souls.*

Ans. I know it, Brethren, unless it be those of you who are for a *New Law-Righteousness*; for I am afraid of you. But consider, (1.) It is dangerous to invade the Prerogative of Christ, even in *Words* and *Expressions*. Do we not express the peculiar Work of Christ by this very Phrase, of *making our Peace with God for us*? This is not *intended*, ye say: Why is it *expressed* then in a Point so tender as this? A King's only Son obtains Pardon for a Criminal; he makes Friends to the Son, and gets the Knowledge of it. Shall he call this a making Peace with the King himself? Nay, saith the Son, if you talk so, I'll leave it upon your Hand, and try your Skill. This is much the Case. (2.) How prone are Men to be indeed putting their Hand to this Work! When under Twinges of Conscience for Sin, they think to make amends, to make Peace, to make Satisfaction. For Peace is only made, by Satisfaction made. And who shall answer for the Mistake which Souls are led into? Who knew not that their Preacher, tho' he said so, meant no such thing as *making Peace*, but only a *making it sure*, or *making it out* to themselves; whereas they took it in the down-right plain English of it. Where Souls are so apt to mistake their Way, we had need be more abundantly cautious.

2. *See that you fulfil the Conditions of the Covenant that are required on your part*; is a Form used by some in their Exhortations: And I think (with Submission) a very ill one. I intend not to dispute about the Word *Condition*, in the Latitude of that Controversy, which would be too tedious, and beside my present Design; but only to hint, that this way of proposing Things is

exceeding disadvantageous. It is detrimental to *Free Grace*, which begins with us, and *tarries not for Man* to do his Part. It detracts from the *Efficacy* of Grace, whose Power works all in us : So that it is not of *Man* who fulfils Conditions, but of *God* who *works in us of his good Pleasure*. Besides, this way of Preaching *Conditions* is to be rejected, if it were only, for that it fills Men with mistaken Notions, and strengthens their natural Conceptions of God's loving them that love him, and working in them that begin with him, and saving them that do good Works to ingratiate themselves with him. Tho' all these are the natural Thoughts of the unrenewed Heart, the wicked Thoughts of the unrighteous Man, which must be, which shall be, forsaken, when Conversion comes; yet are they all built up, by this Way of building Men upon Conditions of their first fulfilling, and teaching them that then they need not doubt but God will do his Part. O Abominable ! to postpone God's Part to ours. Speak Believers ! Was it so with you in the Day of your Espousals ? Or rather, was it not as it is described, in an absolute Promise, *I will say, it is my People, and they SHALL say, the Lord is my God.* Zech. xiii. 9. There's nothing almost more dangerous to Souls than this way, of *fulfilling Conditions on our Part, that God may do his*. It sets them so beside the way of Grace and free Promise for Righteousness and Strength, and leads them so naturally to the Bondage of the first Covenant, to seek Righteousness by the Works of the Law, as nothing can easily do it more. If there were no other Reason against the Use of the Word *Condition*, than that Frame of Spirit it tends to generate in Men, this were sufficient to lay it aside, at least as to a frequent Use.

3. *Directions for Conversion* favour not of the Gospel, but have a disagreeable Sound. They mean not, I presume, *Directions for the Spirit of God* to go by in converting Sinners : For he'll take his own Way, and per-

perhaps not keep to their Directions. Do they mean then, Directions for Sinners to convert themselves by? Is not this to take the Honour of that glorious Work from the Spirit, and to direct Men to take it into their own Hands. In Conversion the Spirit of God will lead Souls his Way, and *bring the Blind by a Way they knew not, and lead them in Paths that they have not known*, Isa. xlii. 16. compare Jer. xxxi. 9. If it is only meant, *Directions to Souls about Conversion*, as, To wait for it under the Means, To pray for it in Christ's Name as a purchased Benefit for the Elect, To expect it to be altogether wrought upon and in them by the Holy Ghost. All this may be allowed. But *Directions for Conversion* is for the Work itself.

Objection. This is to fall out about a Word, to contend about a Name.

Ans. But that Name deceives Souls, and suggests *Free-will* and natural *Power* to their Minds. And when they read such Titles, they are ready to think, Here is some rare Expedient found, that they need continue unconverted no longer. It makes them seek to take the Work into their own Hands, which they should by Faith seek for from CHRIST and the Spirit. But let them know, The Work will not prosper till the Lord the Spirit has it in his Hand, and that Free Grace and Almighty Power must work all their Works in and for them (that they may come and bow thereto, and cast themselves thereon), which is hid from them by the *Blind* of the censured Phrase, *Directions for Conversion*.

I have been longer in this Digression than I intended; therefore to conclude, and bring up all to my Purpose, Tho' *Exhortations* may be stretched too far and mismanaged, and *Motives* too, ill chosen, and the like; yet this makes nothing against the Substance of the Doctrine before pleaded for, touching *Exhortations* to Sinners, and *Motives* proposed to them, in preaching the Gospel,

SECTION III.

Some other Truths stated, according to the Analogy of Faith in Scripture ; and briefly defended, without Respect to any Man's Writings.

CHAP. I.

Of the Extent of a Minister's Work in Preaching the Word.

THE Doctrine of *Christ Jesus* the Lord holds the first Place, and is the Foundation of all other Doctrines whatsoever. This is the Source and Fountain whence all the Streams must flow ; the Centre where all the Lines of Truth do meet. Yet this very Thing supposeth that there is a Variety of Truths to be insisted on. Howbeit, every Truth in the Place it holdeth in the Building and Harmony of Truths, growing up on the Foundation CHRIST. The Doctrine of the Person, Dispensation and Office of the *Spirit the Comforter*, holds the next Place to that of the Son, the Redeemer. The Grace and Love of the Spirit, and the Method he takes in his glorious Work, must be opened and set forth to Souls. Here now is a very large Field of Discourse. Howbeit the Doctrine concerning Christ being that which the Spirit mainly worketh by, *this* is the Principal ; whence we are called *Ministers of Christ*.

2. Again, When the Gospel hath been Preached, and a Number of Souls been brought to Believe in any Place ;

Place; the next Work in the Order of the Gospel to build an *House* for Jesus Christ, an *Habitation* for him by the Spirit to dwell in, even a Spiritual House, which is his People. Consequently, here is a large Field of Discourse again for the Ministers of the Word, to shew the *Comings in, and goings out, the Form and Fashion, the Laws and Ordinances* thereof, and how the several Members ought to walk therein towards God and towards Men. *Ezek. xliii. 11.* And here,

3. The several Duties of Temperance, Righteousness, and Godliness, are to be explained and urged. Our *Doctrinals* must be accompanied and mixed with *Practicals*. Sometimes there may be Occasion to preach one Duty, and sometimes another.

4. Also to declare the righteous Judgment of God against Sin and Sinners, and to preach the *Law* for Gospel Ends is a Part of the Counsel of God that we are to make known. Divine Subjects that are to be handled by faithful Dispensers of the Word, who are willing to declare *the whole Counsel of God*, are very many. *Acts xx. 20, 21. 27.*

It is not my Design to prescribe unto or direct my Brethren in the Ministry, of whom I have more need to learn: But rather to make some People sensible, That the Compass of a Minister's Work is not so narrow as they are ready to take it; and that Ministers may not be beside their proper Work and Business, when they are not directly upon the Doctrine of the Person or Performances of Christ, *so the Saviour of CHRIST runs thro' their whole Doctrine*. If indeed there are not some who make too great a Clamour even against a Necessary and Evangelical Preaching of Duty, and unduly censure those who run not in one single Strain according to their Fancy, then I confess I have spoken these Things into the Air. I know, there hath been too great an Occasion given to this Offence taken, which yet has on the other hand been carried too far.

It will be said, That *Christ and Free Grace cannot be preached too much ; and this Doctrine is more profitable than Preaching of Duty.* I answer : When this is pressed to cry down or exclude the Doctrine of the Spirit and his Work ; the Preaching of the Law in subserviency to the Gospel ; and of Duties to Believers ; it is as if one should say, The Gospel of *John* is so sweet and evangelical that a Man cannot read it too much. The Answer is, It is true, but a Man may read other Portions of Scripture too little. Neither can we preach Christ and free Grace too much, and it is this that brings Life and Refreshment to the Soul, and Strength for a spiritual Performance of Duty : Yet, I say, other Subjects are not to be neglected. We must fulfil (or make full Proof of) our Ministry, in all the Parts of it, 2 *Tim.* iv. 5.

C H A P. II.

Of God's Eternal Love to, and Delight in, his Elect in Jesus Christ.

THE free Eternal Love of God is the first Original and Well-Head of our whole Salvation. He beheld his Elect in *Christ* with the highest Delight and Complacency from Everlasting. Howbeit, tho' his Good-will towards them, and his Delight in them, are not at all to be separated ; yet perhaps they may be distinguished. His Delight then may be considered either in the *Upper* or *Under-Fall* way. In the First of these. They did not stand before him, such as they were in the First *Adam*, in a State of Innocency : But in *Christ* their Head, predestinated to the Adoption of Sons, and to a full Conformity unto the Son of God, even such as they shall be in the Heights of Glory, in the Kingdom of God *All in All*. Here were the Objects of God's Delight.

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Delight. Again, *under the Fall*: And here they were not considered either as lying in a fallen State, as the Descendants of the First *Adam*; nor as in Part restored, under Imperfections of Grace and Holiness: But as in Christ their *Redeemer*, their *Righteousness*. In him the Father from Everlasting delighted; and thro' him in those who were *chosen—unto the Obedience of Jesus Christ, and Sprinkling of his Blood*, 1 Pet. i. 2. This was and is a *Sin-covering Righteousness*, wherein the Father took a Prospect of his Elect as complete, and without Spot. Behold then the Objects of God's Delight! Not as in *Adam*, not as in the *Fall*, not as we behold them in their Guilt and Pollution. Thus God could not have any Satisfaction or Pleasure in them; they were not meet Objects for his *Delight*. Yet even thus considered, they were meet Objects for his Love of *Benevolence* or *gracious Good-will*. Here then lies the Ground of the Distinction, in the under-fall Way. God *loved* poor fallen Man, and *gave his Son* a Ransom; he *gave his Son*, and took up an infinite *Delight* in his ransomed, thro' the *Atonement* of his Blood. This Love of *Complacency* then supposes the *Righteousness* of Christ and Reconciliation foreviewed. There was *Love* antecedent to the very Gift of Christ: But *Well-pleasedness* and *Delight* is the Fruit of Christ's Obedience. It is *in him*, and *for his Sake*. I don't use this Term, *Love of Good-will*, to lessen or *diminish* that Love which gave Christ, it is so transcendent that it cannot be enough magnified: (this opened the way for God's making us such as he could delight in) But only to *distinguish* it from that which follows the foreseen Performances of our Redeemer. *Delight*, as it is a *Supralapsarian* Benefit, is altogether inseparable, and not at all to be distinguished from God's Good-will towards us; and it is absolutely eternal, and eternally unchangeable. The Entrance of Sin by the Fall made no Alteration here. But when *Delight* supposes or includes

includes *Friendship* and *Reconciliation*, it is evident that *this* is a Fruit of the Mediation of Jesus Christ.

Object. Could God delight in Men in their Sins, lying in the Fall, in their Blood and Pollution? Thus it is certain they were not delectable Objects, but *Children of Wrath*, Objects of Divine Displeasure, and under the Curse.

Ans. 1. God as a Lawgiver was angry and offended with all Mankind for Sin: But there was a Ransom provided, and Satisfaction to be made, *foreviewed*, which the Father took a secret Pleasure and Delight in from Everlasting.

2. The Elect by Nature, as Children of the First Adam, and in relation to the Covenant of *Works*, were under the *Curse* of the Law; viz. a Sentence of Death: But Infinite Love provided a Ransom and Redemption from that Curse. In that glorious Redemption God delighted, and in them viewed therein, from Everlasting. For who dares set a Date hereof? This is a different thing from their being viewed in the First Adam.

3. Therefore; It is granted, *As* fallen, *as* sinful Creatures none were the Objects of God's Delight. I say, concretely considered as involving the State they lay in, none were so. And while we are in a State of Nature, we are in that State which God hated and doth hate. And *so* considered we could be only the Objects of a Love of *Benevolence*. Hence many Christians can get no further, but are fain to take it up so, that the Elect, while Unbelievers, are loved only with a Love of *Benevolence*; but when they come to believe, they are then beloved with a Love of *Delight*. But,

4. Tho' *as* fallen and *as* lying in that State, they are not the Objects of God's Delight, yet *while* such they are so, upon *another Account*, and under *another Consideration*. The imperfect Holiness of Believers is not able to make them meet Objects of God's Delight, nor are they in this World such as he can fully delight in,

in, but only as they are beheld in *Jesus Christ*. Surely all that know their own Hearts will agree to this. And tho' *not as in thyself*, O Believer, yet *as in Christ*, the glorious God beholds thee as without Spot, and has Delight in thee. We are too apt to think that God's Thoughts are as ours, and that he sees Things as we see them, *Isa.* lv. 8, 9. *Job* x. 4. Howbeit as Sin is always the Object of God's Displeasure, even in his People; so their Graces, and Spiritual Performances of Duty, are the Object of his Well-pleasedness, in which, thro' the Righteousness of his Son, he hath Delight also, as the Fruits of his Holy Spirit. Thus we must hold the Balance of Divine Truths, and not set one in Opposition to another, as the manner of some is.

C H A P. III.

Of Christ's bearing the Filth of Sin. The Author's Thoughts humbly submitted to better Judgments.

THAT Christ bore the *Filth* of Sin, as well as the *Guilt* of it, is by some asserted to be a Truth of the Gospel; and charged by others to be a Position at least *bordering* upon Blasphemy. Can these widely differing Opinions (as they seem to be) be brought near to a Reconciliation? I conceive they may.

The *Filth* of Sin is either *Original*, viz. the Corruption of Nature which we brought into the World with us; or that Pollution which further *arises* from every new Transgression. The *Filth* of Sin is the *Stain* or *inherent* Defilement thereof cleaving to our Nature. And perhaps the *Odioufness* and Hatefulness of it in God's Eye, may also bear this Name.

I lay

I lay it down as a Truth not to be departed from, that *Christ bore Sin only by way of Imputation*. It follows then, that if Filth is not capable to be imputed, Jesus Christ did not, could not, bear it. Imputation is nothing else, but its being set to his Account, to answer, to suffer, to satisfy for, as if he had been the Offender. This Doctrine is so essential to the Life and Comfort of a Believer, that I wonder if any who have *known the Terror of the Lord, or tasted that the Lord is gracious*, should at all call it into Question.

Christ bore our Sins, 1 Pet. ii. 24. that is the Scripture Phrase without the Distinction of *Guilt* and *Filth*. To say that *he bore the Guilt of Sin*, may mean only, he bore our *Obnoxiousness* to Punishment, and so seems to evade his bearing of *Sin itself*. But the Scripture saith, He bore our SINS. Now Sin is either the *Sinful Act* or Offence, or the *Defilement* arising therefrom. This latter has truly the Nature of Sin, and was as such set to Christ's Account.

It is not the *Guilt of Sin* (as Guilt means only our *Obnoxiousness to Punishment*) that was imputed to Jesus Christ. It seems not proper to speak so. But SIN was imputed; and the *Result* of that Imputation was *Guiltiness* in the Eye of the Law and Vindictive Justice of God. Yea, and this was all the Result that could be; and the Issue was *Punishment*, and thereby *Satisfaction*. Hence Christ was not *filthy* by bearing of Sin, but *guilty* only; and that not because *Guilt* was imputed, but because *Sin* was imputed in its Contrariety to the Law.

All that is truly and properly Sin Christ bore; but a polluted defiled Nature is Sin, it is contrary to the Law. *The Lord has laid on him the Iniquity of us all*. Now is not *Filth*, *Iniquity*, according to the Apostle's Definition of Sin, 1 John iii. 4. ? How hateful to God is that *Corruption* of Nature, which we brought into the World with us ! And wherefore ? Because it is contrary to his Holiness, *i. e.* because it is *Sin*. In

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Type, when all the *Iniquities* of *Israel*, and all their *Transgressions* in all their *Sins*, were put upon the *Head* of the *Scape-Goat*, was their *Filthiness* left behind? Was not the Pollution of their Nature to be confessed? Surely, it comes in among the *ALL*, or else they were not so pure as they imagined themselves to be, and as the Scripture teaches them to have been, on that Day of Atonement. Again, Christ *who knew no Sin* was made *Sin*. Not made filthy, No; But *Sin* itself was charged upon him; the Whole, the *ALL* of it. *Guilt* is the Result of this Imputation, and not the *Thing* imputed.

The Imputation of Sin to Christ, as was before hinted, is its being set to his Account, and laid to his Charge, that he must answer for it. And here I ask, whether it is not as bad and grievous on Christ's Part, to stand charged with the most horrid *Acts* of Sin, which he never committed, as to be charged with our Pravity and Pollution, which never was inherent in him? The Result of either will be only *Guiltiness*, in a Law Sense, as to *him*; and not *Filthiness*, which was impossible. Again, whether on our Part, it is not as bad and dangerous to stand charged with a corrupt polluted *Nature*, as to be charged with these or those *Acts* of Sin? The Truth is, it is rather worse. And if Christ did not bear it for me, I must for myself; and if he did not answer for it, it lies upon me.

The *Filth* of *Sin* must be satisfied for by *Blood*, as well as *washed away* by the Water of the Spirit. Our Purification is founded in *Atonement* for our Impurity. This was the great Instruction intended by the *Water of Separation* (Numb. xix. 2—9. comp. Heb. ix. 13, 14.) which was a *Purification for Sin*, made of the *Ashes of an Heifer*, first sacrificed, and her *Blood sprinkled directly before the Door of the Tabernacle*, &c. Now he that owns, Christ satisfied for our Filth and Pollution, and washed us therefrom in his Blood;

owns for certain that Christ was charged with the Filth of our Sins, and answered for it.

He that lessens the Depth of Christ's *Humiliation*, detracts from the Greatness of his *Love*. His bearing of Sin was an essential Branch of his Humiliation. And if he bore *all* Sin, he bore our Filth, which is contrary to the Holiness of the Law. O the Depth of Christ's Abasement, and Glory of his Love! Some Men seem mighty tender of the Honour of Christ in this One Point of Christ's bearing Sin. To say, That he was a Sinner by Imputation, that he was made Sin, and bore the Whole of it, even all the Sins of his Elect, this is horrid to be spoken of the Son of God, who was without Sin. Yet they are not ashamed to rob him of the Honour of his Grace in the highest Instance of it, his being *made Sin*, and *bearing our Sins*. Bear then your own Sins: Whether it be the *Act* or the *Filth*, you will have enough of it. Give me a Sin-bearing, Sin-atonning Jesus!

Object. *Filth denotes Inherency. This is the formal Nature of it, and where that is not, there is no Filth.*

Ans. *Filth* may mean the *Odiousness* of Sin in God's Sight; *This* is altogether inseparable from it, where-ever it is. This he has testified, in that *He condemned Sin in the Flesh* of Christ, *Rom. viii. 3*. Farther, It may as well be said, That Guilt connotes an Act or Acts of Sin; yet they who say, Christ bore the Guilt of Sin, don't mean that ever he committed one Act of Sin. Infinitely far be this from the Holy Jesus. So when he bore the Filth of Sin in the explained Sense of *Imputation*, it does not note Inherency in *him*. It was indeed inherent in *us*. Therefore he bore OUR Pollution, not his own. Guilt does suppose a *sinful Act*; Sin is inseparable from the Sinner, and supposes a Subject of Inhesion; unless it be in this *Mystery* of *Imputation*, where the Sin of the *Principal* is transferred to his *Substitute*. In like Manner it is as to the *Filth* of Sin. It does Originally note *Inherency*; but
in

in this Mystery of the Imputation of Sin to Christ, it is another Matter. It will come at length to this, that Christ did not bear [Sin] but only [Punishment], by the same Way of Arguing, whereby this Doctrine is opposed.

If Imputation is nothing but *Laying of Sin to Christ's Charge*; I would fain know, why the Corruption and Impurity of my Nature, which is as great a Sin as any, was not as capable of being laid to Christ's Charge, and being atoned for by him, as any Act of Sin was?

The Reconciliation proposed in the Beginning of this Chapter, was not between those who affirm, and those who deny, the Imputation of Sin to Christ; but between those who, owning this, are *for* the Imputation of our *Filth* to him, on the one Hand, and those who are *against* it on the other. Those who are against it own, That all our Sins were laid on Christ, but they are very sure, as well they may, that he was never touched with the least Filth or Defilement of Sin. Those who are *for* it, think that our Pollution is SIN, and therefore must come within the Compass of that *All Sin* which he bore. But when this was but *imputed*, they think it does not at all infer that he was defiled. The Sum is, That which was *Filth* with respect to *us*; was not so, with respect to *him*. And the Imputation of the Offence, and of the Stain, as to him, rises up only to a *Guiltiness*, as standing in our stead. Yet may he properly be said to bear the Filth, because he bore *that* which when it is in us, and on us, has that Name; even as he is said to *bear Sin*, who knew no Sin. If it is granted, That all Sin was set to Christ's Account, and that the Stain thereof in our Natures was answered, atoned, and satisfied for, by Him, it is the same Thing I have pleaded, and all I contend for. If I am under any Mistake in stating this Matter, I shall be very thankful to any of my Brethren, in Love to convince me of it.

See Mr. Chauncy's *Alexi.* Part 2. p. 129.

C H A P. IV.

Of Imputed Sanctification. This Opinion Rejected. Sanctification the Evidence of Justification, Proved.

THERE are some who besides Imputed *Righteousness* for Justification, do speak of Imputed Sanctification. This is a groundless and weak Opinion. For,

1. All that is or can be imputed to Sinners from Christ is Holiness or Righteousness. They distinguish between Imputed *Holiness*, and Imputed *Righteousness*. The former for Sanctification as an inner Garment, yet not inherent: The latter for Justification as an upper Garment. There's not the least solid Ground for this Distinction. For tho' there's a great deal of Difference between *Righteousness* Imputed for Justification, which is Christ's, and *Holiness* inherent in us: Yet there's altogether no Difference between Christ's Holiness, and his Righteousness. In *him* it is the same; whatever is *Holiness*, that is also *Righteousness*. A Conformity to the Holy Nature and Law of God.

2. Whether it be Holiness or Righteousness, the *Issue* and *Effect* as to *us* can only be *Justification*, as to what is imputed; and not Sanctification. If by *Holiness* they understand the Purity of Christ's Nature, and by *Righteousness* the Obedience of his Life and Death; yet as to *us* the Effect can only be *Justification*. Imputation can only change our Covenant-State, and not our Natures. Nothing that is *Imputed* can stand instead of that Renovation, New Nature and Holiness that is made necessary to us in the Method of Salvation, that we may enter into the Kingdom of God. Is the Holiness or Righteousness of CHRIST imputed to us? What then? Then are we *justified* before God by that Imputation. And this is all that can be the Effect thereof in a Way of Imputation.

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The Effect of it, in some sort, is *Sanctification*. For Righteousness imputed is the Spring and Cause of Holiness inherent: But not so that OUR Sanctification should be imputed. For,

3. Sanctification is held forth in Scripture as a *Real* and *Positive* Work upon us. Therefore tho' this is the Effect of Righteousness imputed; yet it is so, as a Change of Nature in us is the Effect of a Change of our Covenant State *God-ward*. We are not sanctified by Imputation, as to say, that Sanctification consists in somewhat imputed. John iii. 7. *Ye must be born again.* It is a Change passing upon the Soul. The Nature must be renewed, the Old Man destroyed, and Principles of Grace and Holiness infused; as Faith, Love, Meekness, Hope, &c. *This is the Will of God (saith Paul) even your Sanctification.* 1 Thes. iv. 3. And *the God of Peace sanctify you wholly,* c. v. 23. This Work is ascribed to the *Holy Spirit* as the Author of it. *Rom. xv. 16. Sanctified by the Holy Ghost.* This being then a positive Work upon the Soul (as the whole Scripture teaches) it cannot be by Imputation as our Justification is. 2 Tim. ii. 21.

It is true, 1. Sanctification has some other Acceptation sometimes, and is taken otherwise than for that *Work* inherent in us. As perhaps *Jud. 1. Sanctified by God the Father.* Separated and set apart for himself, ordained unto Holiness. 1 Cor. i. 2. *Sanctified in Christ Jesus,* viz. Mystically, our New Nature being prepared for us in him.

2. The Purity and Holiness of Christ's Nature is imputed to Believers. This hath been defended by great Divines. The Law requires perfect Rectitude of Nature as well as Holiness of *Life*. We should not therefore have a perfect Justifying Righteousness without this Purity of Christ's Nature. This covers the Impurity of ours. This Dr. Goodwin, Vol. 3. Of *Christ Mediator*, p. 344. understands to be the *Law of*

the Spirit of Life in Christ, Com. viii. 2. opposed to *the Law of Sin* which Paul found in his Members. That when he found a depraved Nature in himself, he takes Comfort that in Christ was a Perfect, Pure, and Holy Nature, *making him free*, &c. But all this as imputed to us, is for Justification.

3. That a Pure and Holy Nature is first prepared in Christ, and then communicated to us by Union and Communion with him. Holiness in Christ is *Imputed* for Justification; and *Imparted* for Sanctification. Our Nature must be sanctified in the Son of God, before our *Persons* could be so; and in order thereunto, We are Sanctified in him *Mystically*, before we are Sanctified in ourselves *Personally*. All Gospel-Holiness is derived from CHRIST by a living *Union* with him; and that which is not so is the same in Kind with the Moral Virtue of the Heathen. By *Communion* with Him in his Holiness, we are made Holy. This is that Sanctification which the World can't abide, for it cannot understand it. But tho' our Sanctification is by *Influence* from CHRIST, and his Righteousness imputed; yet it is not an *imputed* Benefit.

4. Our best Works and Duties, our Holiness and Sanctification, are (as I may say) justified by the Righteousness of Christ imputed, that covers them all. It is this that gives Acceptance to our *Persons*, and procures the Acceptance of our *Performances*. Our best Holiness needs to be wrapped about with this Righteousness of Christ. If all these Things will content, they are granted. But they don't infer that Sanctification is by Imputation; tho' perhaps they include all that some intend, if they understood themselves.

The main Text that is urged for the Opinion which I oppose, is 1 Cor. i. 30.—*Who of God is made unto us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption*. But there is no Necessity, that he is made *All* these the *same Way*, viz. by *Imputation*, nor is there any such Thing intimated in the Text. It suffices
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that he is made all these of God unto us, and each in its proper and suitable Way. Dr. Goodwin, *ubi sup.* understands by *Wisdom* inherent Holiness or Sanctification by a *Synecdoche*; and *Sanctification* he understands of the Purity and Holiness of Christ's Nature, *Righteousness* of the Obedience of his Life, and *Redemption* of his Death and Bloodshed. And these three last, he thinks, are by Imputation: But then he takes all these to be Parts of our *Justification*. Or if we understand it thus; *Wisdom* for Direction, *Righteousness* for Justification, *Sanctification* by the Spirit, *Redemption* in full Deliverance, and complete Salvation, at the Last Day; the First and Third are by *Communication*, the Second by *Imputation*, the Fourth by *Purchase* and *Power*.

Those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and would *live to him who died for them*, should take heed, they give no Countenance to an Opinion, That *there is no Need of inwrought Sanctification, of inherent and practical Holiness*, that Men may content themselves in an *imputed Sanctification*, as well as in *imputed Righteousness* for Justification.

I go on to *another Point*, to which I shall speak briefly, and conclude this Chapter.

Quest. *Whether Sanctification is an Evidence of Justification?*

I answer in the Affirmative. (1.) That Sanctification is in itself such an Evidence. (2.) That we ought to endeavour to make out our Justification this Way, at Times when we are in the Dark about it.

1. *That Sanctification is in itself such an Evidence.* I distinguish between what it is *in itself*, and what it may be to the Sense and Experience of the Soul. *He that believeth on the Son of God hath the Witness in himself*, 1 John v. 10. The Spirit of God is that Witness, who sometimes witnesseth by *himself*, sometimes by the *Blood*, sometimes by the *Water*, v. 8. The Spirit in the Heart, and the New Creation, which is his Workmanship, is an abiding Witness in the Believer:

But he doth not always hear and understand the Testimony of this Witness. Sanctification is in itself a Witness, but not always to the Sense and Feeling of the Soul. It is so in itself. For,

(1.) Otherwise it could be to no Purpose to *examine ourselves*, whether we are in the Faith, and how it stands as to the Work of God upon our Souls; if the Safety of our State could not at all be discerned hereby, or our Interest in pardoning Grace. But the Scripture makes this to be an incumbent Duty, as is to be shewn in the next Chapter.

(2.) The Work of the Spirit is a *Discovering Work*, as to what is done by the other Persons, the Father and Son, in our Salvation. As the Son works from the Father, and *does what he sees him to have done*, *John v. 19.* and so Redemption keeps equal Pace with Election, and is of the same Extent; thus the Spirit also does what he sees the Father and Son to have done, and works from them both. And Regeneration is of equal Extent with Election and Redemption. This breaks open the Eternal Counsels of the Father; and brings to Light the secret Love of the Son, as to whom he laid down his Life for. As the Works of Creation evidence the Wisdom and Power of God, so the New Creation Work in the Heart evidences the Grace and Love of God to such a Soul. It cannot be said of such a Work as of the *Wind, Earthquake, and Fire*, *1 Kings xix. 11, 12. the Lord is not in it.* The Work of the Spirit is an Evidence of Election, *Jer. xxxi. 3.* and therefore we are to make our Election sure by *Calling*, *2 Pet. i. 10.* It is then as sure an Evidence of our *Justification*; for that cannot be doubted of, where there is an Evidence of everlasting Love. The Spirit may witness in an absolute Promise to the Forgiveness of Sins, upon this Ground, that *Pardon of Sin is absolutely free*: And he may bear Witness by Sanctification, because *it is his own Work*, the sure Effect of the Love of God and Christ.

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Everlasting Gospel, vindicated. 89

The natural Order of Things requires that we make out our Justification by Sanctification ; and not Sanctification by Justification : For tho' in bringing forward our Salvation, the Father, is First, the Son next, and the Spirit last : Yet in *Manifestation*, the Spirit is first, and so we ascend to the Love of the Son, and lastly of the Father. Further, the Spirit's Work is *felt* and *experienced*, and therefore is more discernible than those Acts of God towards us, which are secret, unless as some way revealed to us.

2. *We ought to endeavour to make out our Interest in Pardon and Acceptance with God, by what he hath done for and upon our Souls in a Sanctifying Work ; even at such Times when we are in the Dark about our Justification.* We are never the farther off from any Testimony of the Spirit in a free Promise ; nay, may we not expect it in this way of Duty, in a serious and close Inquiry into the State of our Souls, rather than otherwise ? Times of Darknefs, and God's Withdrawings, seem to me the proper Time and Occasion of Self-Examination.

This is not to turn aside from the Covenant of Grace to the Covenant of Works ; as Mr. Buckley on the Covenant, Part 3. c. 8. p. 252. has well shewn ; seeing Sanctification is a great Blessing of the *Covenant of Grace*. Nor is this to make our *Works* the Ground of our Justification ; but the *Work of the SPIRIT*, the Evidence of our Acceptance with God.

But as it is as to the Matter of Election, that tho' Calling and Sanctification are the Evidence thereof, yet that a Man is *Uncalled* and *Unsanctified* is no Evidence that he is not *Elected* : So, that a Soul is not yet Called and Sanctified, is no certain Evidence that he has no Part in Reconciliation made by Christ, or in Justification as *in him*, tho' it is certain, Such an one is not *Personally* Justified ; and unless he believe in the Son of God will be condemned.

And

And when Sanctification lies dark, that we cannot get clear satisfying Evidences of it ; our Work is, as lost Sinners, by *direct* Acts of Faith to come to CHRIST, and venture our Souls and Salvation on Him, as Souls when they *first* Believe and Trust in Him.

But to Discern our Calling, is Matter and Cause of exceeding Joy, *Gal. vi. 4.*

C H A P. V.

Of Self-Examination.

CONCERNING this I observe two Extremes.
1. In the *Neglect* of it, and crying out against it as *Legal*, or of no Use ; or to be practised only by *Believers* in the *Exercise* and *Light of Faith*.

This seems to me of an ill Tendency, and I fear is by some designed to give Countenance to Spiritual Slothfulness, to a carnal careless Frame of Spirit, and it may be to sinful Practices, which Men are loth to call themselves to an Account for.

It is plain, that *Self-Examination* is a *Duty* belonging to Men under a *Profession* of Faith, 2 *Cor. xiii. 5. Examine yourselves whether you be in the Faith, &c.* These *Corinthians* were not all of them true Believers. The Apostle was afraid, *lest he should bewail many of them which had Sinned, and had not Repented, c. xii. 21. comp. c. xiii. 2, 3.* Now (saith he) ye have a *Profession* of Faith, look to it, that it be not a Profession only, but that ye be in the Faith. It was not certainly to be taken for granted, by a groundless Confidence that they were in the Faith, but this was to be the very Inquiry, *Whether they were in the Faith?* The Apostle don't tell them, they must stay till they discerned it in its own Light, for what need then to examine ?

examine? But, saith he, you that profess Faith, see whether it be a true Faith. And doubtless they were to look back to the first Day, how it was wrought; as well as *de presenti*, to know *that Christ was in them*, if they were such as God approved.

Thus, in order to a Receiving of the Lord's Supper, *Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup*, 1 Cor. xi. 28. This is proposed to rectify that undue Coming and Eating that was among them, which might give some Ground to question whether they had a right Taste and Sense of that Love which is set forth in that holy Ordinance.

And elsewhere, *If a Man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every Man prove his own Work, then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another*, Gal. vi. 3, 4. Men that are not exercised with great Temptations, and so not overtaken in great Faults in the World's View, are ready to think well of themselves, and to fly out upon those who are left to fall by Temptation, v. 1. But saith the Apostle, you may be *nothing* for all that in Religion, look inward, and prove your own Work.

By Faith Abel—obtained Witness that he was Righteous, God testifying of (or with) his Gift, Heb. xi. 4. with *Gen. iv. 4. 7.* God may witness to his People in a way of Obedience, and witness with and to their Obedience as that which is acceptable to him; and this he may do in the Duty of Self-Examination; but then it must indeed be discerned *to flow from Faith in Christ*. In like manner God witnessed from Heaven of and unto the Obedience of *Abraham*, when he offered his only Son, *Gen. xxii. 12.* *Now I know* (saith he) *that thou fearest God*, &c. Doubtless therefore the Spirit of God may bear Witness to the Fruits of Faith in his People, and by them to Faith itself.

Farther, If to examine a Man's self is the Duty of Professors, then it will be, and is, the Duty of Ministers
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of the Word, to help Souls in that Work, by discovering the way of the Spirit on Souls, in what manner Grace is exercised; and what are the genuine Fruits thereof.

2. The other Extreme is, in *Over-pressing Self-Examination, and carrying it too far, or miscarrying in the Managing of it.*

And this is either in Souls inquiring into their own Spiritual Estate, or in Ministers urging unto this Work, or handling their Uses of Examination.

1. As to Souls in their managing of this Work, there is a Miscarriage, (1.) When they examine in the *Neglect or Delay of Believing.* Examination of itself will not help a Man that is destitute of a Saving Work, so as to mend his State. It is *Believing in the Son of God* must do that. (2.) When they examine after a *Justifying Righteousness*, still inquiring after something *within* to trust unto, and looking *inward* to find out something to commend them unto God. This is at the Bottom of many Men's serious Inquiries. (3.) When they are looking within for a *Ground of Faith.* In this lies one main Difference between Faith and Hope; that *Faith* being the first Actings of a lost Sinner's Heart towards Christ the Saviour, has no Ground but what is *without* us in the free Invitation and Promise of the Gospel. Regeneration itself is not the *Ground* of our Believing in Christ, for we must believe *as Sinners.* But *Hope* respecting future Good, having Eternal Life for its Object, must have the Work of Faith for its Ground, *the Reason of that Hope,* 1 Pet. iii. 15. Else a Man will hope in vain. (4.) When they make it a *continual Work.* (1.) Without respect to those more *special Things* that call for it, as when worldly Frames prevail, and indwelling Sin puts forth itself in a more than ordinary manner. (2.) Without respect to *other Duties* that are to be performed. There is *Believing Work, Repenting Work, &c.* as well as Self-

Self-Examination, which some run altogether upon, and turn all they hear that way continually. But the Generality are far enough from this Extreme. (3.) Without coming to any *Comfortable Conclusion*, or indeed to any settled Resolve, as to their Soul-State. This in Believers is their Weakness, and their Sin: Yet it is, not that Unbelief which does most directly oppose the Gospel. For as the Object of Faith is Christ who is without us, and not the Work of Grace which is within: So the Object of Unbelief is the Record of the Gospel concerning Christ, which is without us, and not so much what is within, as, to Question whether I am a true Believer. Howbeit, the Ground of this *Uncertainty* is very much The not giving *Christ* his Honour, by looking to and living on his *Obedience* and *Blood* alone; The not giving the *Spirit* his Honour as *Comforter*, looking to him for Sealing to the Day of Redemption; The not living more by *direct* Acts of Faith: For hereby would Sin wither and die, and Grace be revived.

2. On the Part of *Ministers*, I must also testify, (1.) That it is usual to lay down such Signs as may indeed touch the Consciences of *grosser* Hypocrites, who deceive others, covering secret Wickedness by an outward Profession: But are not at all suited to discover those more *secret* Hypocrites, who, being upon a Covenant of Works, intend not to deceive any, but do cheat their own Souls with a Self-Righteousness; who with much of Nature-Sincerity go about keeping the Law. (2.) It is usual to lay down those things for Signs that are very little *distinguishing*; and so slightly as not to discover what is *Vital* and *Spiritual* in every Grace of the Spirit inquired into. There may be an endless Round in going from one Grace to another, while we mark not out something *Vital* in every one. For Faith, Love, Repentance, are best discerned by their own Actings, by something *Vital* in Themselves. (3.) A Neglect of directing Souls unto immediate and
direct

direct Acts of Faith is too usual. Whereas the *Exercise* of Faith will afford an Evidence oft times, when Examination fails herein. We must *mix* our Enquiries therefore with Actings of *Faith*, and by Believing make it out that we have believed. (4.) A Contempt, or at least a Neglect of the *Spirit's immediate Testimony*. The Spirit can bear Witness by himself in an absolute Promise. There is an * *Intuitive* as well as a *Discursive* Assurance. It is indeed the Believer only that is the Subject of Assurance; and that in the Way of a Spiritual and Holy Walk, or at least *now* sweetly disposed thereto; and the Spirit's Work at such a Time is discerned and felt upon the Soul with no small Clearness. And even in all our Self-Examinations, unless the Spirit is pleased to be a Spirit of *Conviction* on the One Hand, or of *Consolation* on the Other, Souls come off without any Advantage.

Happy will it be for the Souls who are led by this blessed Spirit of Truth into all Truth, and kept from all Extremes in the narrow Way of Faith and Holiness, unto Eternal Life. *Amen.*

* *Arrowsmith, Tac. Sac. l. 2. c. 9. p. 197.*

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